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FRENCH MEMORIES
OF
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

General Rochambeau.

After a sketch attributed to De Fersen, aide-de-camp to Rochambeau.

FRENCH MEMORIES

OF

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

BY

CHARLES H. SHERRILL

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK
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1915

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TO

MY FOREFATHERS

WHO TOOK PART IN THE STRUGGLE FOR AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

RECOMPENSE SHERRILL

JACOB SHERRILL

JEREMIAH SHERRILL

DIRCK WYNKOOP

SOLOMON DAY

JOHN BOYLAN

THIS PICTURE OF EARLY AMERICAN SOCIETY

AS SEEN THROUGH CONTEMPORARY
FRENCH EYES

IS REVERENTLY DEDICATED

FOREWORD

If the reader be not pleased with the following sketch of early American customs, he should blame a certain ancient sofa, and not the author! For it was the said sofa that caused these lines to be written, and it came about in this way: Among some old furniture handed down in our family is an unusually long mahogany sofa, upon which, says tradition, General Lafayette frequently sat when he came to take tea. Tradition further alleged that in the memoirs of some Frenchman (name not given) this fact was set forth at length. Curiosity to read what this unknown had to say upon the subject led through such pleasant literary country that soon the original purpose of the quest gave way to a constantly growing interest in these memoirs and records of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, from the battle of Lexington till the transfer of the Federal Government to the city of Washington. While studying ancient stained glass the author gradually realized that the art's advanced state at the beginning was due to its being merely mosaic transferred from the wall to a window so that the light could shine

through, thus enhancing its color value. What he has tried to do in this case is to collect the mosaic out of dusty archives and ancient books, and then set it up where the light of to-day could shine through these bright memories and reveal a completed picture of our ancestors and their times colored to the life. Although no reader of this book can ever receive therefrom one-tenth the pleasure it gave in the writing, nevertheless, the author hopes that it may serve to encourage more and frequent journeys into the literary country it maps—perhaps those journeys will justify the writing of the book.

CHARLES H. SHERRILL.

20 East 65th Street, New York City,
September 1, 1915.

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FRENCH MEMORIES
OF
EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA

CHAPTER I

OUR FRENCH VISITORS

"Oh! wad some power the giftie gie us to see oursel's as ithers see us," sang Burns. If ye will, gentle readers, ye may have the "giftie" for the taking, if your wish be to see how "ithers" saw us during those formative years when our national liberty was being heated in the melting-pot of war, and poured into the mould of constitutional government. And what other nation can show such friendly, such sympathetically appreciative historians, such kindly "ithers" as were the French who wrote of us in those days when our nation "lay a-borning"? The spirit in which they set about their study of us is well expressed by the Comte de Ségur to his wife: "I conform to their habits, I respect their customs, for that is the only way to know the Americans well."

There are two entirely different ways in which to write history. One is the time-honored manner of the "one-man book," a picture of some portion of a nation's life drawn by one pen, and from the sole point of view of one author. But is this

method as truly descriptive of the people described as it would be if, instead of being limited to one author's thought upon the subject, it could be broadened so as to include the points of view of many observers from widely differing angles —foreign observers preferably, so as to secure impartiality? In other words, to construct a contemporary mosaic picture made up of bits struck off from many men's brains! Although beset with difficulties, would not such a task, if accomplished, possibly be fuller in its truthfulness than the story of any one historian?

And what are these difficulties? First, there must exist a sufficient number of reports upon the particular epoch under consideration; next, the writers must be so diversified in character and type as to assure a wide scope of material; then the period selected must have possessed such interest abroad as to arouse the best and most sympathetic interest in these foreign narrators; and, lastly—most awesome difficulty of all—the work of compilation that such a history with so many roots must entail!

But in our case all these difficulties dissolve into thin air, like a mirage in the desert, when we approach and examine them. The life of the American people during the quarter of a century which elapsed between the battle of Lexington (1775) and the installation of the Federal Government

at the new city of Washington (1800) was of such engrossing interest to the French as not only to produce a series of about seventy memoirs, but also to insure that their authors' acute minds were keenly aroused to the scenes taking place under their eyes. So interesting are these human documents that the most forbidding difficulty of all—the work of compilation—proves to be a delightful occupation, a labor of love. And then as to the difficulty of finding writers of sufficiently diversified type, we shall be met with a most delightful surprise. Although the authors consulted were all Frenchmen, so many were the angles from which they observed, and so greatly did their points of view differ, that, taken together, their observations cover the entire field with amazing completeness. Not only can we draw from the narrative of ordinary travellers, but also from all sorts of specialized and contrasting types—a royalist exile like the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, or Brissot, the Girondin republican, a eulogistic marquis, or a captiously critical philosopher, a botanist, a geologist, a bookseller, or a farmer—from Crèvecœur, who lived so long among us as to spoil his French, and the Comte de Revel, who spent only twenty-four days in our land (all in the trenches at Yorktown), from the Chevalier de la Luzerne, the Minister who greatly admired us, to Beaumarchais, the

government agent, who sometimes ridiculed us—as perhaps was to be expected from the author of "The Barber of Seville"! Nor are we limited to these memoirs, numerous though they be, in preparing this sketch of our country's yesterday as seen through French eyes, for the archives of the various departments of the French Government are filled with a rich store of reports of those times written home by diplomats, soldiers, and sailors. Then, too, there are many private letters, some published and more unpublished, which lend intimate touches so necessary to our picture of the long ago. Surely no important epoch of any country's life has ever been so fully or so sympathetically described by the people of another nation.

Many French writers upon America have purposely been left unquoted because the authors wrote at second hand, and had not themselves visited our country and seen conditions with their own eyes. Obviously, they do not serve our purpose so well as the writings of the men who lived with and fought alongside our ancestors, and brought away with them that indescribable something which Kipling says ever exists when two strong men meet—the bond of human sympathy. Then, too, sundry of the writers are of small value to us because they were so engaged in recording military details as to include little

or nothing about the life of their American friends; some of these, like Admiral de Grasse, and Bougainville (whose memory is delightfully embalmed in the gorgeous purple-flowered vine that bears his name) were engaged in naval conflicts off our coast, and lacked land service in America during the period we have chosen. We have left untouched the literature describing such French settlements in America as Asylum, Scioto, etc., for the obvious reason that their customs were French, not American.

A most important fact added by these personal narratives to the general history of the period is that although the French Government was undoubtedly swayed by political considerations in lending assistance to America, hoping thus to strike England in a vital spot, it is obviously true that these individual French annalists were inspired not only by disinterested friendship, but also by a cordial interest in our new experiment at liberty. They were allies of the heart, not of the scheming brain. Says Brissot in his preface: "You will see in this book of travels the prodigious effect of liberty upon customs, industry, and the improvement of the human race. This is the encouraging picture which these travels will offer to the friends of liberty." Indeed, so genuine was their regard for their American friends as to blind them to many unrelated faults, and to leave

their narratives more flattering than our ancestors deserved—a very agreeable discretion on their part, say we!

One feels vastly more interest in a tale told by one of our own friends than by an unknown—the story at once ceases to be impersonal and takes on an intimate flavor. So, without delay, let us proceed to make the acquaintance of these friendly eighteenth-century Frenchmen before we settle ourselves to hear their engaging comments upon our ancestors. A most delightful group of personalities they will prove to be, alike only in being Frenchmen and in their friendly attitude to the customs and people of the new-born American republic, but in every other respect a most diversified gathering.

We shall find that they will naturally fall into groups of varying size, either by reason of their professions, personal traits, inclinations, or turns of thought. Some of them, like Talleyrand, Chateaubriand, or Ségur, were already on the road to brilliant futures and the Temple of Fame; while others, like Brissot, Custine, de Broglie, and de Lauzun, will be forever sadly grouped in our memory as fellow victims of the guillotine.

Many of them were of the warrior caste, but (anomalous though it be) it is from those devoted to this stern profession that we shall glean most of our lighter hints of American life. While some

came here to fight, still others left home because of civil strife in France—temporary exiles awaiting on our hospitable shores the return of more peaceful conditions in the Old World. More than a few will prove to have visited our land equipped with a philosophical turn of mind, for it must not be forgotten that to be a philosopher was a reputation then highly esteemed. A few were naturalists and seekers after facts connected with reclaiming the wilderness, and new conditions of soil and climate, so full of interest to inhabitants of lands where nature had long been servant of man. A few were merchants, to whom commerce and its opportunities vastly overshadowed all other human interests. One only was a woman, the Marquise de la Tour du Pin, but her pen pictures are the best of all—so gay, so brave, so discriminating.

It is for us to make the first advances to these folk of two centuries ago, so, hat in hand, let us approach the first group, and make the acquaintance of those representatives of the warrior caste sent to our aid by Louis XVI.

At their head stands the steady, resourceful commander-in-chief of the land forces, General Rochambeau, already well on in age and experience when he was selected by his king to command the little French army of six thousand men landed in Providence, R. I., to aid the struggling colonists.

Close by him is the charming but irresponsible Marquis de Chastellux, welcomed everywhere by Americans of every rank in life, and delightfully responsive in his account of this welcome. When he officiously wrote to the French Minister, criticising Rochambeau, and telling that the plan of the allies was to attack New York City, the letter fell into the hands of the English, who, deceived as was Chastellux regarding our real purpose, returned it to Rochambeau. Most significant of that general's character and knowledge of men was his handling of this insubordinate letter; he sent for Chastellux, showed it to him, and then threw it into the fire! This reveals at a glance the natures of the two men, and it also explains why Rochambeau's homely comments contain so much of value concerning the American life he saw going on about him.

Near Rochambeau stands Baron de Kalb, who was sent to America as an investigator by the French Government before ever the war began, and who had so glorious an end at the battle of Camden, fighting for our independence.

Baron Cromot du Bourg and Baron Louis de Closen, both aides-de-camp of the commander, will prove most engaging comrades, so clear was their insight into the young American manhood they came to know so well. De Closen commented both with pen and pencil, and the pages

of his note-book are enlivened with sketches of American damsels who caught his fancy.

More serious in vein will be Commissary Claude Blanchard, and more precise in his observations. He learned what he could of Americans, but his chief thought was always for the welfare of the French troops. One of the few criticisms he received from his commander was on account of the poor quality of American bread—surely no fault of the hard-working quartermaster.

More serious than Blanchard in cloth, but far less so in his point of view, was the worthy chaplain, Abbé Robin, whose writings contain more than a few hints on fashions and the ways of American women.

By way of sharp contrast we will turn next to the Duc de Lauzun, the dashing soldier but unprincipled man. We shall do well to forget the immorality of his memoirs (which, Sainte-Beuve said, alone provided sufficient excuse for the French Revolution!), and remember only that the portion reporting his stay in America is entirely free from that reproach. Remember, too, the episode outside New York when he rode back under a heavy fire to recover his hat which had blown off!

Lieutenant-General Mathieu Dumas made careful notes of his experiences while serving under the French colors in our country, but left them behind him in a box at Doctor Bowen's house in

Providence. He thought they were lost, but forty years later Mrs. Ward, sole survivor of the Bowen family, gave them to General Lafayette in New York to return to their owner. It is unfortunate that Dumas's memoirs deal almost exclusively with military events, and say but little of the people whose battles he was fighting.

Comte Guillaume de Deux-Ponts so distinguished himself in the savage charge on the English redoubts at Yorktown that he was decorated by Louis XVI, and immortalized by Trumbull in his picture of the surrender of Cornwallis, now hanging in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington. It is interesting to recall that all the French officers in that picture were painted from life by Trumbull in 1787, at Thomas Jefferson's house in Paris while the latter was American Minister to France.

That the Comte Joachim de Revel should have occasionally been severe in his strictures upon American ways is not to be wondered at, for he was landed from the French fleet at Yorktown, and for twenty-four days and nights fought in the trenches without sleeping in a bed or getting a chance to change his clothes. Never did foreigner receive so poor an example of American hospitality, and we cannot begrudge him the joy which he experienced when once more back in his bunk aboard ship.

Duc de Lauzun.

From the painting of the surrender of Yorktown, by John Trumbull, in the Yale School of Fine Arts.

Prominent in this group of warriors is Admiral Comte de Grasse, whose fleet played so important a part in the Yorktown victory by preventing the English navy from succoring their land forces, but here again we shall be disappointed, for his memoirs deal with naval technicalities alone, and not at all with life on shore. One of his officers, however, Chevalier Aristide Aubert Dupetit-Thouars, known later for his trip round the world, gives a merry account of his adventures on the shores of Chesapeake Bay, where he took most kindly to the toasting habit then so prevalent among us. A very human sailorman was Dupetit-Thouars, and quite outspoken and unphilosophical when he took pen in hand.

Count Axel Fersen, popularly remembered as the devoted friend who drove the coach in which Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette tried to make their escape from Paris, has much to say in his vivacious memoirs of the days he spent in America while fighting in Rochambeau's army.

Nearest to us of all this group of fighting Frenchmen is a young officer with a curiously shaped head—pointed face and low brow—a youth who risked his king's displeasure to cross the ocean and help us. He was a human battery of enthusiasm for liberty and Americans, so much a part of us that he led our troops in the assault on the Yorktown redoubts, and named his son "George Wash-

ington"—so close to our hearts ever since that every schoolboy in our land can tell his heroic story—our beloved Lafayette—so energetically and enthusiastically brave in our cause, and yet of so thoughtful a modesty as to insist that American volunteer officers should outrank officers of equal grade in our ally's army! From him we shall quote freely, for no more sympathetic picture exists than his of the people he knew and loved so well.

Associated with Lafayette there will be found the Comte de Ségur, son of the French Minister of War, and himself later Ambassador to St. Petersburg, and also the gallant Vicomte de Noailles, who marched all the way on foot from Newport to the Hudson to set his men an example of endurance. These three young men had been intimates at the French court, and both Lafayette and de Ségur married sisters of de Noailles.

Another intimate friend of these three was the Prince de Broglie, and it is easy to imagine his and de Ségur's disappointment at being unable to share Lafayette's exciting experience in America, their arrival here being delayed until September, 1782, when the active fighting and its attendant glory were past, although the French army had not yet embarked upon its return voyage. Both of them travelled extensively, and they record their experiences delightfully, especially the frankly

irresponsible de Broglie, who upon his arrival in America "only knew a few words of English, but knew better how to drink excellent tea with even better cream, how to tell a lady she was pretty, and a gentleman he was sensible, by reason whereof I possessed all the elements of social success." It is, perhaps, because of de Broglie's own disappointment in missing the fighting that he reports so picturesquely the tale of young Bozon de Périgord, who, ordered to return to France, disguised himself as a private and tried to smuggle himself on board a ship carrying French troops bound for active service in the West Indies.

Next we come to four cousins of de Broglie's, the de Lameth brothers. This gallant quartet, each of them a colonel, is represented in the literature of the time by the memoirs of Théodore, who, though not in the United States and therefore unable to throw light upon our life and customs, does give us a vivid picture of the fight at Yorktown, in which his brother Charles was twice badly wounded at the head of his hundred grenadiers that breached the palisades protecting the English redoubts so as to permit of the French assault. Alexandre de Lameth, another of these four brothers, shared Lafayette's long captivity in Austria.

Another of the military observers was the Comte de Pontgibaud ("a French volunteer of

the War of Independence," he calls himself), whose story was of such interest as to be published in English as well as in French. In closing the list of soldiers sent to our aid by France, let us remember that the German-born Steuben was selected, paid, and sent here by the French agent Beaumarchais, and that thereafter he signed himself de Steuben and not von Steuben, as inscribed below his statue in Washington.

Next beyond the military group we shall observe sundry gentlemen whom, to give them pleasure, we will call the philosophers, and although less numerous than the band of officers, they are double that of the naturalists, the historians, the travellers, or the exiled émigrés. There are no less than half a dozen of them, headed by Jacques Pierre Brissot de Warville, the scholar, politician, and propagandist, who, though he became the leader of the Girondins, paid the penalty of his moderation at the guillotine. Philosopher though he was, he was as immoderate in his abuse of Chastellux as in his devotion to Crèvecœur, Quakers, and the cause of the negroes, nor did his altruistic philosophy prevent his signing an agreement with French bankers before he sailed for America to send them, and them only, certain information concerning the public debt of the United States and of the individual States, so that they could carry on "the speculations which

they proposed to make in American securities," and for this they paid him ten thousand livres. Few Frenchmen ever visited America better equipped with letters of introduction than he; of one from Lafayette to Washington we shall learn later. Notwithstanding these letters, the French Minister, de Moustier, considered him a mischievous person, and would have nothing to do with him, which stand was perforce followed by Brissot's old friend, Crèvecœur, then serving as French Consul in New York. This same de Moustier, later on Ambassador to Berlin, and in 1791 Minister for Foreign Affairs, left in the archives of the Foreign Office many interesting documents touching American commerce. All the foregoing, however, in no wise affected the value or interest of Brissot's writings, for he was a good friend of our country.

Etienne Clavière will chiefly be remembered by us as the man who induced Brissot to visit America, and who collaborated with him in one of his books.

Another of the same group was the Gallicized Italian, Mazzei, less memorable for his persistent efforts to introduce the culture of the vine in America than for having been the man who by his indiscreet publication of a confidential communication embroiled Thomas Jefferson with Washington. Mazzei lived for several years near Monticello, Jefferson's home in Virginia, and

ended his varied career by becoming privy councillor to the king of Poland, after which he retired on a Russian pension and died in Italy at the ripe age of eighty-five. Another friend of Jefferson's was Pierre-Samuel Dupont de Nemours, who at his request wrote in 1800 an elaborate treatise on national education in the United States, what it was and what it ought to be.

Two more of this group, J. E. Bonnet and M. Jh. Mandrillon, were rather more statistical than philosophical, and are chiefly useful as providing certain dry bones for our structure, leaving us to seek the flesh and red blood in the writings of their contemporaries.

Although the Marquis de Marnézia and Roux both philosophized concerning French emigration to our western country, they disagreed radically as to its expediency, the former being as optimistic as the latter was pessimistic.

Moreau de St. Méry, whose diary reposed so long in the archives of the Ministry of the Colonies in Paris before being published by the Yale University Press, was such a practical philosopher as to foresee the certain future of the impoverished émigré Talleyrand, and befriend him during his stay in America—to his own advantage when the great man had come into power. Not only is St. Méry of great service in our researches, but also to any student of Talleyrand, for all of the

many letters that St. Méry received from him are carefully copied into the latter's diary. It was this same painstaking diarist who had already codified the laws affecting the French colonies for Louis XVI, and yet it was under his presidency that in 1789 the electors of Paris, against that king's wishes, voted to establish a national militia.

For safety's sake—to prevent quarrelling—there stands well apart from this group of philosophical folk a pair of critics, for so we can best describe Ferdinand M. Bayard and Chevalier Félix de Beaujour. Bayard was the more active of the two, and therefore the more interesting, while Beaujour (later on Consul of France) was rather pompous in his attitude toward men and things, a trait evidenced by the hundred-thousand-franc monument he erected for himself before his death in the cemetery of Père La Chaise, Paris.

Contrasting strongly with the pair just described are several naturalists: General Victor Collot, the Michaux, André and François André, father and son, botanists, C. F. Volney (afterward a Senator) the geologist, and the famous J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur, author of the "American Farmer," which he sold for "30 guineas with promise of a present if the public likes the book," and which was destined to have an instant and wide success in English, French, German, and Dutch. Two of these men, Michaux and Collot,

during their travels here, conducted confidential diplomatic investigations for two French ministers —the former for Genêt, and the latter for Adet. Crèvecœur, chiefly because of assistance lent to the botanical garden of New Haven (like Michaux's services to Charleston) was elected an honorary citizen of that town. Furthermore, he deserves well of all Europeans by reason of his seventy-two-page pamphlet urging their use of potatoes; in this work there might usefully have collaborated General Marion, who proved to the British troops how well Americans could fight on a diet of sweet potatoes! Another foreigner even more interested in gastronomics, and one who left many amusing anecdotes of his three years here, is Brillat Savarin.

Another small group will be chiefly known to us as travellers—Etienne Marchand, who early wrote of what is now Alaska, Baudry des Lozières, Milfort, Bossu, Berquin-Duvallon, and Perrin du Lac, who described Louisiana, soon to join our Union of States, and Captain M. Bourgeois (also for some time an inhabitant of New Orleans), who might be termed a Pan-American writer, so completely does his list of cities visited cover our western hemisphere.

Perhaps the most picturesque group of all is that of the agents and diplomatic representatives sent us from the French Foreign Office, and it

certainly includes surprisingly differentiated personalities. Among them are the Chevalier de la Luzerne, admiring us and by us admired, and the indiscreet Citizen Genêt, so unwise in his activities as to necessitate his recall. There is the modest Bonvouloir (whose political reports, written in a preparation of milk, were invisible until heated by a red-hot shovel), and his opposite, Pierre Augustine Caron de Beaumarchais, better known from his authorship of "The Barber of Seville" and "Marriage of Figaro" than for his series of remarkable letters to Vergennes, setting out the political advantage to be gained for France by aiding the American colonies against England—arguments which, thanks to their skilful use by Vergennes (then Minister of Foreign Affairs), caused Louis XVI to decide in favor of that momentous step. Of this same Vergennes Jefferson wrote: "He has very imperfect ideas of our institutions, and no confidence in them"; but it must never be forgotten that it was nevertheless he that won over his royal master to our cause. The responsibility for that decision was Vergennes's, and he risked his entire future on its success. He knew men, and the Ministers he sent us from the French court were far more in touch with our republican institutions than those selected by the First French Republic.

The French Minister first accredited to us was

Conrad Alexandre Gérard de Rayneval, one of two brothers in the Foreign Office. Vergennes always referred to him as "Gérard," reserving the full family name for the other brother. It is felicitously appropriate that much should have been written of this period by a modern French diplomat and distinguished man of letters, Ambassador Jusserand, than whom no more successful foreign representative has ever visited Washington. Following Gérard, the complete list of ministers between 1775 and 1800, with the dates of presenting their letters of credence to our government, is Chevalier de la Luzerne (November 17, 1779), Count de Moustier (February 26, 1788), Colonel Jean de Ternant (August 12, 1791), Edmond G. Genêt (May 17, 1793; diplomatic relations with him were suspended by our government, August 15, 1793), Joseph Fauchet (February 24, 1794), and Pierre Auguste Adet (June, 1795). Of these, Colonel de Ternant might have joined our soldier group, for he was Lieutenant-Colonel and Inspector with our forces in the south, and was captured at the surrender of Charleston. He spoke English fluently, and was "a man of wits and talent," according to Chastellux.

The last group of all is in many ways the most interesting, and comprises the names of four temporary exiles from France who found intolerable the political troubles accompanying the French

Revolution. Ill assorted they will certainly seem, for they are the Vicomte de Chateaubriand, Talleyrand (later Prince of that name), the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, and the Marquise de la Tour du Pin. Of these the two former will prove less useful to our purpose than the others, and for widely differing reasons—Chateaubriand as being too poetic, and Talleyrand for excessive brevity. Chateaubriand's love of the picturesque caused him to be fascinated by the habits of our Indian tribes, and he devoted so much enthusiasm to his discussion thereof as to leave but little for our forefathers and their ways. Nor were his observations of Indian customs nearly so convincing as Perrin du Lac's, or as Captain Bossu's accounts of his beloved Allabomons (Alabamans) and Akanças (Arkansas). Milfort, by reason of twenty years spent among our Indian tribes, was the best qualified to chronicle their ways. The Creeks made him their War Chief, which possibly explains the dedication of his book to Napoleon Bonaparte.

Of Talleyrand's private life while in America the less said the better. The fact that he had been Bishop of Autun seems to have escaped his memory during his stay in Philadelphia, where Washington declined to receive him—some say for political reasons (to please the French Minister, who protested strongly against his reception), and some say for social reasons. Perhaps it was

a combination of both. In any event, it did not interfere with the high opinion of our future which he attained after extensive travel in all parts of the country, an opinion which found practical expression in his entering upon a land speculation with property in Maine, which he purchased from General Knox, as well as with another large tract in Virginia. It was while visiting the Marquis and Marquise de la Tour du Pin on their humble farm near Albany that he learned of the events of the ninth of Thermidor, including the death of Robespierre, which opened the way for his return to France and subsequent great career.

The diary of the Marquise de la Tour du Pin, especially that part which treats of her stay in America, is altogether charming, and gives a delightful picture of these distinguished scions of nobility rising at four o'clock every morning to make butter for their living, but on Sunday dressing up in their best and repairing to the more congenial atmosphere of the Schuyler and Van Rensselaer homes in Albany. It is evident on every page how warmly she reciprocated the sympathy everywhere extended to them in this land of refuge, beginning with the moment when the good folk of Boston took her cropped hair to mean preparation for the guillotine, before escaping from Paris. Alas! for her, that she had to learn of American journalistic enterprise by read-

ing in one of our gazettes that her father, Colonel Dillon, had perished on the scaffold!

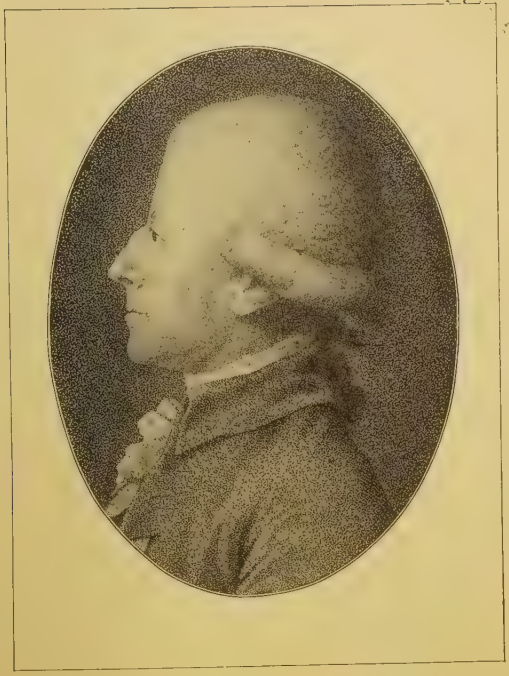
Another visitor to her humble farm was the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, like herself an exile. In the eight volumes which he wrote upon his travels and studies in America during the years 1795, 6, and 7, we shall find a wealth of material upon which to draw.

In addition to this long list of early visitors, there also exist other later Frenchmen equally efficient in their friendliness—men like Ambassador Jusserand, Vicomte de Noailles, Leon Chotteau, and Henri Doniol, modern chroniclers of the French soldiers and sailors who fought in America, and three eighteenth-century men, Hilliard d'Auberteuil, Abbé Raynal, and François Soulès, students and writers of our history in those early days, even though they never saw our land. Amazing, is it not, that so many Frenchmen should have devoted their pens to the cause of our independence and the praise of American manhood in those formative days of our nation-building?

An illuminating conclusion deducible from their collective writings is that, because our ancestors had long enjoyed great political freedom and were fighting to prevent its withdrawal, our revolution was rather a war to retain rights than one to secure a hitherto unenjoyed liberty, as was the

French Revolution. This fact helps to explain why our revolution was followed by a stable republican government, which was not the result in France. This also explains why the customs and manners of our people changed hardly at all during the period of twenty-five years that separated the battle of Lexington from the beginning of the eighteenth century, the period during which our French friends had us under the closest observation. Consider how greatly everything in France altered during the quarter century following their revolution, 1789 to 1815, and it will help you to realize how stable by contrast was our manner of living during the same period following our uprising. Nor is this the only great problem of national life upon which light is gained by a study of the French observers of America during this critical period.

Great interest was felt among the French in the Society of the Cincinnati, that famous military order instituted May 10, 1783, by American and French officers with George Washington as President General. Louis XVI gave it his official sanction at Versailles December 18, 1783, and became its Patron. So great was the influence of this society in its early days that many feared, because its membership was hereditary, that its aristocratic tendencies would endanger our republican form of government. As one proof of how real that danger



Duc de La Rochefoucauld.

From a drawing by J. Guérin.

then seemed it is amusing nowadays to recall that Tammany Hall was founded May 12, 1789, for the avowed purpose of acting as a counterweight to the aristocratic Cincinnati! Of the French mentioned in this chapter there belonged to the Cincinnati: Lafayette, Rochambeau, de Grasse, Chastellux, Dumas, de Noailles, Collot, Deux Ponts, Lauzun, Charles, Alexandre and Théodore de Lameth, Bougainville, Ségur, Broglie, Custine, Fersen, Blanchard, du Bourg, Bozon de Périgord, Closen, Pontgibaud, Ternant, Gérard, and Luzerne.

Some of the memoirs were written under a pseudonym, and published outside France in order to avoid the official censor. So repressive an influence did this censorship exert that many complaints were made that it robbed French presses of much business otherwise obtainable from American writers unwilling to be exposed to annoying excisions, to say nothing of the long delays necessitated by this official supervision. Crèvecœur printed his first book, "Letters from an American Farmer," in England and in English, but when he came to bring out his "Voyage dans la Haute Pennsylvanie, etc.," he did it in Paris and in French, protecting himself, however, by announcing that it had been written in English, and that he had only translated it. Mandrillon published both his "Voyageur Américain," and his "Spectateur Américain," in Amsterdam, alleging that

the first was written by an unknown Englishman by order of Lord Chatham, the prime minister, and translated into French by "M. Jh. M." When, two years later, he printed the second book, he had grown bold enough to lay aside the translation subterfuge, although still unwilling to put more than "M. Jh. M." on the title-page, and further concealing his identity by adding "Négociant à Amsterdam." Bonnet published his "Réponse aux Principales Questions, etc.," at Lausanne, giving as the author "un citoyen des Etats-Unis," while Mazzei printed his "Recherches" at Colle, and signed it "un citoyen de Virginie." In the latter book there appear four letters on the unity of legislation written by the Marquis de Condorcet, but here again we have the author's identity concealed from the censor by the pseudonym "Bourgeois de New Heaven," an unintentionally flattering spelling of New Haven, Connecticut, which had conferred the honor of citizenship upon the author. Bourgeois printed his book in London, and d'Auberteuil his in Brussels—both of them being in French. That it was considered worth while to take all this trouble to put books on America into the hands of French readers shows conclusively how keen must have been the public interest in that subject.

In order to reproduce all the details possible

of the panoramic picture painted by our French friends, the author has examined not only all their available memoirs unpublished or published, but has also searched through the amazingly complete archives of the French Government (deposited in the Archives Nationales, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and several of the Ministries), opened to him with that courtesy for which the French are so justly renowned.

A collector of these early memoirs will occasionally encounter an anomalous value set upon certain books, and an attempt to puzzle out the causes for these seeming discrepancies in cost will lead him along pleasing paths. He will find that General Mathieu's work is still in demand as a text-book for students of military service, and is therefore never to be cheaply had. Quérard explains the rarity of Marquis de Lazay Marnézia's pamphlet, "Lettres écrites des rives de l'Ohio," by saying it was seized by the police. The first edition of the memoirs of the Duc de Lauzun was one of the very few books published by Honoré de Balzac during his short (and unsuccessful!) career as a publisher, and it is therefore snapped up by collectors of unusual books. There were but twenty-three copies printed of the first edition of Chastellux's travels, and that, too, by the printing-press on board the French fleet at Providence, which easily accounts for the price set

upon a copy. The first edition of the so-called memoirs of Admiral de Grasse proves upon investigation to consist of only about a dozen prints of his story of the engagements leading up to his defeat in the West Indies by Admiral Rodney and the English fleet, these few copies being intended for use at the court-martial before which he was tried. General Collot's memoirs (posthumously published, by the way) are rare because the bookseller who bought the entire edition, both French and English, deliberately destroyed all but three hundred of the French and one hundred of the English copies, hoping thus to increase their sale value. The collector will find that interesting facts like these will be constantly appearing to increase the delights of his fascinating occupation.

If the said collector turns his attention to the prints and other illustrations of the period, he will soon learn that, although there was a wealth of them in England just then, especially of political caricatures, the opposite was true across the Channel, for the French had but few illustrations of interest dealing with the momentous facts then taking place. Fewer still are there prints to be had of American events, and most of these are allegorically represented, and therefore lack those details illustrating customs and home life which we would have wished.

At the back of this book will be found a list of the authorities consulted. It is with real pleasure that the author acknowledges his special indebtedness to the gentlemen in charge of the Library of the French Foreign Office, of the Archives Nationales, and of the great collection at the Bibliothèque Nationale; to Senator Pierre Baudin, who, while Minister of Marine, gave permission to study the records of his ministry; to Ambassador Robert Bacon; to several friends in the Library of Congress; to Governor Simeon E. Baldwin of Connecticut; to Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes of Yale University; to Mr. Henry Vignaud, the learned collector of Americana; to Mr. Charles A. Munn; to Mr. James Hazen Hyde; to General Asa Bird Gardiner; to Mr. William C. Lane, Librarian of Harvard University; and lastly, to a number of antiquarian booksellers of Paris, who, understanding the purpose of this volume, helped in ways for which no financial recompense was possible.

The collecting of the available information and its reduction by selection have been so interesting that the hours devoted thereto seem in the retrospect but minutes. As the work progressed, the author's amazement constantly grew that the people of a foreign race should not only have plentifully spilled their blood for us, but also should have so voluminously recorded the salient social

characteristics of the new nation they had helped to its feet. It is the writer's earnest wish that these pages may assist in reviving the memory of France's splendid service to the fellow citizens of Washington.

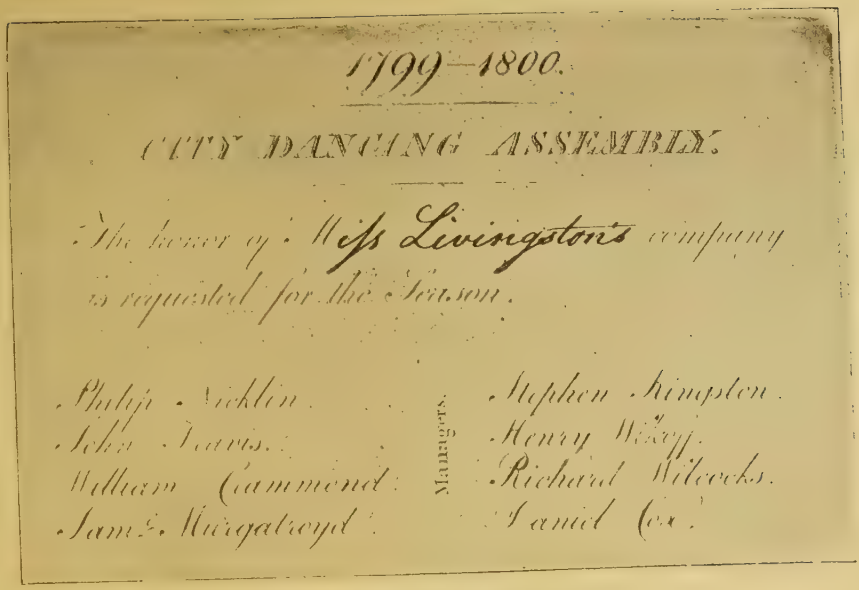
CHAPTER II

DANCING, VISITS, MUSIC, CARDS, CONVERSATION, ETIQUETTE

"Come, miss, have a care what you are doing," shouted the Master of Ceremonies to a damsel who was permitting a bit of gossip to interrupt her turn in a contra-dance. "Do you think you are here for your own pleasure?" That such discipline should have characterized a Philadelphia assembly in 1781 was almost as surprising to the French officer who saw it as it is bewildering to us in these free-and-easy days of tango teas and complete surrender to that invading thief of society's waking hours! How cut-and-dried were the Philadelphia dancing-parties of those times was recorded in great detail by the brilliant Marquis de Chastellux, the French officer whom American society did its best to spoil, and who repaid its attentions by his amiable account of American life. But listen to further details of this same assembly: "A Manager, or Master of Ceremonies presides at these amusements. He gives to each dancer a folded ticket which is numbered, and thus it is chance

which decides the partner that you are to have and must keep the whole evening. All the dances are arranged in advance, and are called out in order. These dances, like the toasts which they drink at table, have a certain political flavor. One is called 'The Success of the Campaign,' another 'The Defeat of Burgoyne,' a third 'The Retreat of Clinton.' The managers are generally chosen from the most distinguished officers of the Army. At present this important post is confided to Col. Wilkinson, who is the army clothier, that is to say, charged with uniforming the troops. Col. Mitchell, a short, stout man of fifty years, a great horse lover, and recently in charge of the army transport both for the American as well as the French armies, used to be Master of Ceremonies, but when I saw him he had just quitted that distinguished position, and danced as a simple citizen. They say that he used to exercise his authority with much severity."

That the securing of partners was admittedly troublesome appears from the legend, "The ladies will be so obliging as to provide themselves with partners before the evening," printed on the eleven hundred invitations issued by the French Minister for the ball he gave Philadelphia society when, in 1782, an heir was born to Louis XVI. One happy sclution of the partner problem was noticed by Perrin du Lac: "Ordinarily



1799—1800.

CITY DANCING ASSEMBLY.

The honor of Miss Livingston's company is requested for the Season.

Managers.

Philip Nicklin. Stephen Kingston.
John Davis. Henry Wikoff.
William Crammond. Richard Wilcocks.
Jam^s. Murgatroyd. Daniel Cox.

City dancing assembly invitation.

From the original in the possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

a young lady attends a ball with a young man with whom she dances constantly throughout the evening; that is always the case when he is her sweetheart. Sometimes a young man who has come alone to a ball is unable to dance at all because no one is willing to accept his invitation." How lacking in republican simplicity were these balls of the new republic appears from the report of one in Philadelphia, written by Minister Adet to his government, February 23, 1796: "Yesterday evening they gave the President a ball, the subscription for which was, as is customary, opened a few days before. All that luxury, flattery, idolatry could imagine was there combined. There were only lacking Body Guards and the red and blue ribbons of decorations to enable one to imagine himself at the Court of a King. Courtiers were certainly not lacking."

Another admiring visitor to testify concerning the dancing-parties of those days was the Comte de Ségur, son of the French Minister of War, whose conclusion after attending numerous balls in Providence, was: "I do not remember to have ever seen anywhere more gaiety and less confusion, more pretty women, well-dressed, full of grace, and with less coquetry." This same de Ségur had formed one of an almost inseparable trio at the French court, the other two being the Marquis de Lafayette, and the Vicomte de

Noailles, and it was a great blow to be left behind when they, first one and then the other, went off to the American war. Of de Noailles one has to learn at second hand, but he has already been introduced as the officer who, when the French moved out from Newport to join Washington on the Hudson, marched on foot all the way in order to set his men an example of endurance. Made of splendid stuff were the French who joined in our struggle for independence, and that nearly seventy of them wrote their impressions of American society and its customs shows how abundant is the material from which to draw an account of our forefathers whose friendship they earned and enjoyed. One after another they shall step forward to contribute to our picture of the American life they knew, and while they are so contributing, we shall come to know and love them as did our ancestors long ago. But now back to our warrior-beau Chastellux and listen while he compares a Boston ball with its prototype, the Philadelphia Assembly: "We set out together for Dr. Cooper's house, and from thence to the Association Ball, where I was received by my old acquaintance, Mr. Brick, who was one of the Managers. I stayed there until ten o'clock. The Marquis de Vaudreuil opened the ball with Mrs. Temple; Monsieur l'Eiguille (the elder) and Monsieur Truguet each danced a minuet, and

did honor to the French nation by the distinguished and graceful manner of their dancing. I regret to say that it contrasted somewhat with that of the Americans, who generally are awkward, particularly in the minuet. The prettiest dancers were Miss Jarvis, her sister, Miss Betsey Brown, and Mrs. Whitemore. I found the women very well dressed, but with less elegance and care than in Philadelphia; as for the hall, it was superb, of a charming style of architecture, well furnished and lighted. For general effect, good order and refreshments, this Assembly was much superior to that at the City Tavern of Philadelphia." It may console our Boston friends to know that more than one of the French commented that the Philadelphia ladies did not excel in dancing! Even that practical-minded quartermaster, Blanchard, noticed in Providence that "neither the men nor the women dance well; they use their arms very awkwardly."

Chastellux, despite his interest in the frivolous side of social life, was too astute to overlook the serious note that in those troubled times was ever to be heard by those who cared to listen. Tories everywhere imperilled the success of the American cause, and in recognition of this fact he notes that "the Tories have been publicly excluded from this Assembly (Philadelphia)" and comments that "Miss Footman was rather contra-

band, being suspected of not being a good Whig." Sundry confirmations of this system of social boycott are to be found in the official despatches of the French Ministers, preserved in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, to which the author was courteously granted access by the French Government. Minister Gérard on August 24, 1778, reports that he had been obliged to give up the idea of a ball on his King's birthday, because "they wish to establish an absolute line of separation between the Whigs and Tories, especially between the ladies." He gives as his reason for reporting this plan to ostracize the Tories, "I presume, Sir, that you will not be indifferent to knowing the moral dispositions of this country," with which sentiment we are in hearty accord.

This same diplomat also wrote home how unwilling were the Americans to allow even Congress to interfere with so popular a pastime as dancing. He tells Vergennes, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, that Congress, at the instigation of Presbyterian delegates from the north, had passed a resolution renewing their request that the several States forbid dances and theatrical representations: "The very day this resolution was published there were held theatricals, acted by army officers and Whig citizens. The next day the Governor of Philadelphia gave a ball to a numerous company!" Even thus early did our people

Elizabeth Bowdoin (Mrs. Temple).

From the original crayon, by John Singleton Copley, in possession of Winthrop Tappan.

set their faces against class legislation by Congress. That this wide-spread love of dancing was not incompatible with patriotism is proved by the alacrity with which the ladies at a Baltimore ball given in Lafayette's honor engaged themselves to make up into shirts for his American troops the linen which he had secured for that purpose.

Nor was the worship of Terpsichore confined to the upper ranks of society, for "all American women, married or single, love dancing. They dance either between eight and eleven in the morning, or else in the evening from sunset until late at night. There you see grandfather, son, and grandson at the same party, which shows that dancing is done for pleasure, and not for display." This last is from the recently published memoirs of St. Méry, long hidden away in the archives of the Ministry of Colonies in Paris. It may be hinted, in passing, that St. Méry is possibly of less value for his deductions from what he saw in America than for the sidelight he throws on Talleyrand, whom he befriended in exile and adversity in Philadelphia, to be rewarded later in France upon Talleyrand's rise to power. St. Méry was for some time employed in the Philadelphia office of Daniel Mérian, the business "name and style" under which the French Government long conducted a large and profitable

trade in America. It is from St. Méry we learn that dancing was every whit as popular in the country as in the cities, and he gives a pleasant account of what he calls a "frolick de melons, to which all the neighbors come to dance and eat watermelons," and which was held annually in August at the Red Lion Tavern, a little way out of Philadelphia on the New York road. Such a combination of physical and gastronomic activities speaks well for the soundness of our forebears' constitutions.

Because the tango and kindred new dances now engage public attention, dancing seems entitled to come first in this retrospect of early American society as seen through French eyes. In similar wise, by way of recognizing the sway of that second social tyrant, bridge, cards shall come next in order. Hear what the French had to say upon a subject so important to the social life of France at that time. Says Chastellux of an evening spent in Boston: "For the first time since I have been in America they made me play whisk [*sic*]. The cards were English, that is to say, much prettier and dearer than ours, and we marked our points with louis or Portuguese pieces. As soon as the party was over the losses were not difficult to adjust, because they were faithful to the rule established in society since the beginning of the troubles, which did not permit playing for

The Red Lion Tavern, near Philadelphia, as it is at present, where a "frolick de melons" was held annually in August.

money so long as the War lasted. This law, however, was not scrupulously followed in the clubs, nor when men played with each other. Bostonians like high play, and perhaps it is fortunate that the War came at this time to moderate a passion, whose consequences had begun to be dangerous." Just before Lafayette left France for the first time, the cause of the struggling English colonies had so laid hold upon the popular imagination of French court circles (where all Americans were indiscriminately called Bostonians) as to displace whist by the new game of "Boston." Card-playing as a pastime was then so general a feature of European life that it is no wonder the French were surprised that this form of gaming was not more in vogue across the water. After this glimpse of city life, let us change the scene to a rainy day at General Nelson's country house: "It is not useless to observe that on this occasion where fifteen or twenty people, of whom all were strangers to the family and the land, found themselves assembled in the country, and forced by bad weather to remain in the house, there was no question of playing cards. How many parties of tric-trac, of whisk, of lotto, would there have been among us as a necessary consequence of an obstinate rain."

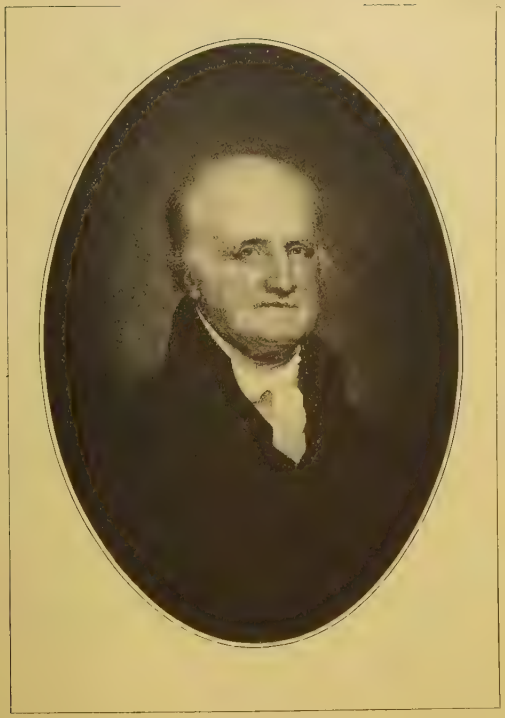
Chastellux points out that another diversion to which Europeans would have turned under like

stress of weather was music, which he calls "a resource unknown in America," although he contradicts himself further on by saying: "Miss Tolliver sang several songs with English words but Italian music." He further refutes himself in this regard by narrating that in Philadelphia "during the afternoon we went to take tea with Madame Shippen. It is the first time since my arrival in America that I have seen music at a social function taking its part in real amusements. Miss Rutteledge played the clavichord and played it very well. Miss Shippen sang with timidity but a very pretty voice. Monsieur Ottow, secretary to Chevalier de la Luzerne (the French Minister) had a harp brought, and accompanied Miss Shippen, and also played several pieces. Music naturally brought on dancing. The Vicomte de Noailles strung up a violin, which he tuned to the harp, and started the young ladies dancing, while mothers and other grave personages conversed in another room." Another of his pen vignettes shows that the range of songs was not limited, especially if the restraint due to female society were removed: "The Secretary of War, Mr. Peter, gave the signal for joy and liberty by singing a song of his own composition, so gay and free that I will dispense with giving either a translation or an extract—it was really very pretty. He then sang another one

more chaste and more musical—a very pretty Italian cantabile. Mr. Peter is certainly the best Cabinet Officer of both the hemispheres for voice and the singing of either grave or gay music." Brillat Savarin took part in a pleasant scene at Bulow's farm, near Hartford, where the host, "to relieve conversation called out from time to time to his daughter: 'Maria, give us a song!' And she would sing with charming modesty, without waiting to be urged, the national song, 'Yankee dudde' [*sic*], 'Queen Mary's Lament,' and 'Major André,' all very popular songs. Maria had taken several lessons and hereabouts passed for a virtuose, but her song pleased rather because of the quality of her voice, which was sweet, fresh, and clear."

What rôle music played at a summer resort like Bath, Virginia, is narrated by Bayard, who journeyed thither on horseback in 1783. Bayard was one of the few Frenchmen to write of us with that caustic criticism which the French can, when they choose, use so tellingly that its significant absence from most of these memoirs affords a striking proof of the kindly attitude of their writers. However, this particular quotation of his is moderately genial and tells of a gathering from which the formality of city life is absent, and where "the ladies are invited to sing. Those with flexible and melodious voices are applauded and don't have to be urged

to sing again. Everyone is willing to sing because they are sufficiently well brought up in the deserts of the New World to dislike those snobs who permit themselves to hiss a woman who has yielded to the invitations of her friends. When a young American woman starts to sing, she begins by putting on a very grave appearance. Her features, which a smile would embellish, are drawn down; she remains perfectly perpendicular on her chair, her eyes fixed on the floor—and one waits until her voice begins to proclaim that she is not petrified." A few years later, we find that a change has set in, and that in Boston "music, which their Presbyterian ministers formerly described as a diabolical art, is beginning to form a part of their education. The piano is heard in some wealthy homes." He hopes, however, that although music is coming into its own as one of the social amenities, Boston women will never get the rage for such perfection in it as the French; "it is never acquired except at the expense of the domestic virtues!" says the serious and inquisitive philosopher Brissot, who brought with him in 1788 a letter of introduction from Lafayette to Washington, which described him as "a man of letters, who . . . greatly desires to be presented to you; he intends to undertake a history of America, and you will therefore please him very much if you let him look over your papers; for he really



Richard Peters.

From the painting by Rembrandt Peale in the
Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts.

loves America, writes well, and will set out matters in their true light."

The correct hours for the paying of formal visits were so variously reported by the French that one is led to believe that there was no settled rule in this regard, at least when the receiving of such welcome visitors was involved. It is, however, rather surprising to find in the pages of Chastellux: "We went to see the ladies, following the Philadelphia custom where the morning is the most suitable time to make visits."

Of course our love of shaking hands did not escape observation. How much depends on the point of view! Baron Closen thought it strange that the French custom of men kissing each other when they met, even in the public streets "caused much laughter among the Americans," and he stoutly maintains that "the American habit of giving long and violent hand-shakes is just as comic as the European kissing custom!"

The gentle art of conversation has always been popular in this country, and our earnest (and excessive?) practice of it ought to have brought us perfection in all its possibilities. Our conversational gifts appealed strongly to the French, whose comments thereon are almost all in a favorable vein, the most notable exception being Félix de Beaujour, according to whom "the conversation of the men turns generally upon

politics or upon business—a favorite topic, for the American loses no chance to make money. Wealth is the subject of all his conversation and the reason for all his actions." That most of the French admired the state of conversation as a polite art in America is praise indeed from a people possessing the high traditions of their famous salons of the preceding century. Brissot, upon the occasion of a visit to a Boston club, was pleased by "the information which they display in their conversation." Of that same city Mandrillon reports that the conversation, as well as "the houses, furniture, clothes, food and customs all resemble so closely life in old London that it was difficult to find any difference between it and that which always goes on in the midst of the excessive population of great capitals." What adjective would he nowadays use for their population!

Chastellux, while in Boston, paid "a visit to Miss Tudor, where we once more had the satisfaction of a quiet conversation, interrupted from time to time by agreeable music, which carried us rapidly on to the hour when we had to go to the club." Equally satisfying were his conversational experiences in Philadelphia, and of one occasion in particular he comments so illuminatingly as almost to revive the scene and make us participators therein: "The 13th I went to dine with the southern Del-

egates in company with the Chevalier de la Luzerne and the French travellers. Mr. Sharp and Mr. Mutterson were the nearest to me. I entered into conversation with them and was very pleased with what they had to say; I was still more so with that which I heard the same evening at Madame Meredith's (daughter of General Cadwallader). It was the first time I met this agreeable family, although Chevalier de la Luzerne was on intimate terms with them, but they had just arrived from the country where General Cadwallader was detained by some business. Madame Meredith has three or four sisters or sisters-in-law. I was astonished at the ease and gaiety which reigned in this family, and regretted not to have known them sooner. I conversed more particularly with Madame Meredith who appeared very amiable and well educated. For an hour we talked of literature, poetry and especially of history. I found that she was well informed on that of France, the relations of Francis I to Henry IV, Turenne and Condé, of Richelieu and Mazarin,—all seemed familiar to her, and she treated of them with much grace, spirit, and naturalness. While I was talking with Madame Meredith, Mr. Linch was engaged with Miss Polly Cadwallader, and she likewise made a conquest, so much so that when we left them Chevalier de la Luzerne amused himself greatly at the enthusiasm which their society

had inspired, and our regrets at having known them so late. It must be said in honor of the ladies that not one of them is what you would call pretty." Volney, the geologist, disagrees completely with the author just quoted, for he considers us a taciturn race, but it is pleasing to note that he is convinced "that the domestic silence of the Americans is one of the most radical causes for their industry, activity, and success in agriculture, commerce and the arts." It would seem as if our ancestors were as gifted in pleasing certain foreigners by silence, as others by conversation!

Because they came from France, a country where social geology had long been clearly stratified, it would have been but natural if our writers had devoted considerable time and many pages to an inquiry anent social classification as practised in a republic, but strangely enough the references to this subject are but few, although those few are illuminating. Nearly all of them take frequent occasion to laud the perfect equality everywhere to be found in our land. Especially did they notice this while travelling and in places of public entertainment, as will appear in the chapters devoted to those subjects. Even military titles did not carry with them any social distinction, says Dupetit-Thouars, who was amazed to see a shoemaker who had been a col-

onel, and an apothecary who was a general! Although opportunity was equally open to every one, our foreign friends did not fail to observe that society as usual made certain regulations to govern its members. Of course Bayard had his customary fling at those regulations, and concluded that there was among us no other test of social rank than the possession of wealth: "The inhabitants of Philadelphia, like all citizens of the United States, are classified by their fortunes. The first class is composed of carriage folk. Almost all these gentry, whatever their origin, have their coats of arms painted upon their carriage-doors. The son of a deported thief has liveried servants just like everybody else. Nobility having been abolished by the Constitution alone, it is not astonishing that so many individuals pretend to be descended from ancient English families. This fad becomes a sort of mania in mercantile cities. The second class is composed of merchants, lawyers, and business men without carriages, and doctors who pay their visits on foot. In a third class are found people who exercise the mechanical arts. Ladies who possess carriages never so far forget themselves as to receive in their homes those of the third class! The people engage in commerce with all the ardor which vanity, long credits and the hope of gaining a fortune easily and rapidly can inspire. The

more business a man does the more he is considered. 'He is,' say they, 'a very busy man': this title obviates the need for meriting any other. Business is mentioned with the same enthusiasm which the French employ to describe some generous action, or to give a panegyric. When a candidate for office publishes his platform in the newspapers, he begins by enumerating how much he is worth. The position of a rich man is the most brilliant which a citizen can desire."

Supposing that this alleged state of affairs were not overcolored, it would be interesting to note how absolutely consistent it is with the statistics given by Price Collier, to show that an English peerage is generally the reward of a marked success in the business world. The colonists were chiefly of English origin and, therefore, why shouldn't they have exhibited English tendencies in social classification as well as in other respects? Beaujour is one of the few to agree with Bayard's extreme view upon the power of wealth in our country: "In Europe there is greatly praised the equality which reigns among them (Americans) but this equality is less real than seeming, because custom establishes in society here even more decided lines than elsewhere, and distinctions the more odious because they are founded on nothing but wealth, without any regard for talents or even for public office.

There is nothing in this country but extreme liberty or extreme dependence—everybody is master or servant, and you do not see any of those intermediate classes which elsewhere serve to bridge over the chasm." Talleyrand (destined later to be Napoleon's Minister of Foreign Affairs) sugar-coats this bitter pill of Beaujour, for although he admits our passion for acquiring wealth, he insists that we have an equally strong one for independence. One day in Maine he said to a man who had never visited Philadelphia: "When you go there you will be glad to see General Washington." "Yes, indeed," replied he, and added, with his eyes sparkling, "and I also want to see Bingham who they say is so rich!" Washington the champion of liberty, and Bingham the man of wealth—together they incarnated America for him!

Surprising as was our social equality to these aristocratic Frenchmen, even more astonished were they at the extent to which love of luxury evidenced itself in this democracy of the new world. They came from a land possessing to a remarkable extent an admirable inbred frugality, and they were, therefore, all the more easily shocked by the wide-spread love of luxury in America. Comte de Ségur remarked in Boston that "democracy has not banished luxury; nowhere in the United States did one see so much

wealth and so agreeable society." Nor was this true in the cities alone, for Talleyrand found "on the banks of the Ohio River, in a house built of roughly hewn logs, a piano, adorned with really beautiful bronzes. When Monsieur de Beaumetz opened it Mr. Smith said to him, 'Don't try to play on it, because our piano-tuner, who lives a hundred miles off, didn't come this year.' " The large number of comments on this subject makes it clear that love of luxury had as firm a hold upon the wife of the day-laborer as upon the wealthiest households. Of Philadelphia, Bayard says: "Few cities in the world have so large a proportion of shops as the Capital of Pennsylvania. The owners of these shops often indulge in luxury beyond their means." It would seem that the high cost of living is an ancient, and not a recent defect in our body politic.

Our national purity of speech and manners was a never-failing source of surprise to the French. Perhaps they gave us more credit in that respect than we deserved, because subconsciously aware that the upper classes in their own land were then touching a lower moral ebb than ever before in their history. It is gratifying to record of the Duc de Lauzun's cynical memoirs that only that one-tenth which describes his stay in America is clean and wholesome. It is a significant testimonial to his American environment that almost

the only decent comment upon women made by this profligate braggart is one on Mrs. Hunter of Newport and her two daughters: "I was never in love with the Hunter girls, but if they had been my sisters, I could not have been more attached to them." A miracle indeed! but, unfortunately, only a temporary one, for its effect seemed to last only so long as he trod American soil. Bayard characterizes our national decency as prudery, even insisting that it materially reduced our vocabulary, as witness the unwillingness of our women to use such a word as "shirt"! Beaujour was much fairer than Bayard, and thought crudity was a fairer term to apply than prudery, and on the whole deals leniently with us: "Some writers, and especially the French, have praised American customs, while others, and especially the English, have decried them. Both of them have gone to excess. In this country, as in others, there is a mingling of vice and virtue, but the virtues appear less attractive than elsewhere because they are rarely accompanied by that grace which makes them admirable, while the vices here appear more hideous because Americans know nothing of the art of disguising them under a deceitful exterior. The American has a crudity of manner which displays him in an unfavorable light to strangers." Chastellux assents to crudity as a fair description of our early

manners, but utterly fails to see the prudery which gained Bayard's notice. Moreover, he is more hopeful than Bayard as to the future which is in store for us: "If music and the fine arts prosper in Philadelphia, if society becomes easy and gay there, if they learn to appreciate pleasure when it comes without being formally invited, then one will be able to enjoy all the advantages resulting from their customs and government without having to envy anything in Europe." The purity which was generally remarked by the French as characterizing our social intercourse certainly produced an admirable effect in our public life, as Brissot points out: "The frequent exercise of reason produces among the Americans a great number of individuals known as men of principle. This name sufficiently indicates their character, a type so little known among us that it has not even been named. It is among these men of principle that you will find the true heroes of humanity—Howard, Fothergill, Penn, Franklin, Washington, Sydney, Ludlow." Ségur, as son of a Cabinet Minister at the brilliant French court, was peculiarly fitted to notice the effect of this general purity of manners upon the assemblies and balls held at Providence, "greater than I ever remember to have seen in any other place."

It is not necessary for one to read many French

memoirs of our revolutionary and nation-forming period before being struck by the wide scope of the observations therein set out. Nothing seemed to escape the attention and even the study of those actively intelligent friends from across the sea. Highly interesting as they are upon all phases of American life, upon none are they more peculiarly competent to speak than upon society —that was a game of which they knew all the rules. Of how they were impressed by what our ancestors ate and drank, what they wore, their methods of travelling, how they studied and then thought, and sundry other allied matters—we say in Elizabethan phrase, "more anon."

CHAPTER III

DRESS AND FRENCH FASHIONS. COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

THERE is nothing which pleases an American more than to discuss something with somebody, and just at present no subject is more popular than the high cost of living. We are all seeking a St. George who can slay this dragon, but thus far without success. There are some who with more philosophy than flippancy declare that we are suffering from the cost of high living, rather than the high cost of living—they say it can be seen on every side. Curiously enough, that is just what the Frenchmen said of our forebears at the end of the eighteenth century. Félix de Beaujour thought "Americans make immoderate use of all the commodities of wealth; no people have more clothes. Elsewhere luxury is only to be found in the upper ranks of society, but here it is everywhere, and it has even penetrated to the cottage of the workingman and the country laborer, so much so that in the United States there is no distinction in dress. The maid is dressed like her mistress, and the poorest work-

man like the First Magistrate." Even more explicit is Chastellux: "Such is the present good fortune of America that there are no very poor people to be seen and everyone enjoys easy circumstances. If some individuals possess less than others, so unlimited are the resources ready to hand that their minds seem to be occupied with what their future condition will be rather than with realizing their present one. Such is the general equality of condition that those things which everywhere else would be regarded as luxuries are here considered necessities. So it is that the salary of a workingman must not only provide subsistence for his family, but also comfortable furniture for the home, tea and coffee for his wife, and a silk dress to put on every time she goes out. This is the principal cause for the high cost of labor, although it is generally blamed to a lack of hands." Chateaubriand protests that a man visiting the United States as he did, expecting to see "the austerity of early Roman customs" in the new republic, would be "scandalized by finding on all sides elegance of attire, luxury of equipages, frivolity of conversation, inequality of fortune,—the tumult of ballrooms and theatricals." Bayard hints that a protest was already arising against this wholesale desertion of simplicity (how useless a protest we to-day can testify): "In vain Citizen Living-

ston, of venerable memory, recalled his fair compatriots to their spinning wheels and to conservative simplicity of manners and fortune, for he was not listened to,—his writings are not read. Even the Quakers, whose luxury is of a less noticeable sort, cannot escape this criticism. Their men have discarded long wristbands, but they still wear shirts of fine linen and buy expensive cloth from England in which to attire themselves. Their wives do not wear feathers, but they are as fastidious in their linen as their husbands, and their dresses are of Bengal cloth. The Quakers load their tables with silver. This excessive luxury is the more objectionable because, like a miser, it absorbs the precious metals, which are valuable only in circulation. The rage for luxury has reached such a point that the wife of the laboring man wishes to vie with the merchant's wife, and she in turn will not yield to the richest woman in Europe." That they were not collectors of silver alone appears from Blanchard: "They are also very fastidious about cups and saucers for tea or coffee, as well as concerning glass, decanters and other articles of that sort, for daily use."

Nor was this state of affairs confined to the cities, for Brissot observes it in that State where city life was peculiarly secondary to that of the country: "The Virginians indulge in a cheap luxury. Peo-

ple who have lived on intimate terms with them assure me that even the richest have only five or six shirts, generally only two or three—while they are wearing one, the other is being washed—washerwomen are very expeditious. Their shirts are fine, and so are their silk stockings. The trousseau of a girl about to be married is composed of only a few chemises. I observed also that they do not understand the use of napkins, that they wear silk scarves, and that instead of using handkerchiefs they blow their noses with their fingers, or with a silk handkerchief which serves as cravat, napkin, etc." He also noticed that American women have the fashion of wearing shawls.

Then as now, while the working classes lived far better than their prototypes in Europe, they also had to pay more for what they bought. Brissot tells of a shirt costing fifty francs: "In Paris it would be worth four and a half francs —everything else in proportion." Gérard the French Minister wrote his government, September 10, 1778: "All merchandize sells for four or five times more than it was worth before the war, and many articles sell in the proportion of six to one." One of his successors, Minister Adet, complains bitterly to the Committee of Public Safety (July 18, 1795), because of the high cost of living at the American seat of government:

"The expenditures to which I find myself condemned alarm me. Although I live like an ordinary citizen of Philadelphia—although my dinners are ordered with republican frugality—I shall spend more than you allow me, and shall be unable to serve my country as I would wish. . . . If my stipend sufficed for my expenses I would not complain of my inability to save anything . . . but there are expenses that I cannot meet as did former Ministers of large private fortune." His immediate predecessor, Minister Fouchet, had already paved the way for him by reporting home December 20, 1794, that "the American people rival in luxury the greatest European cities."

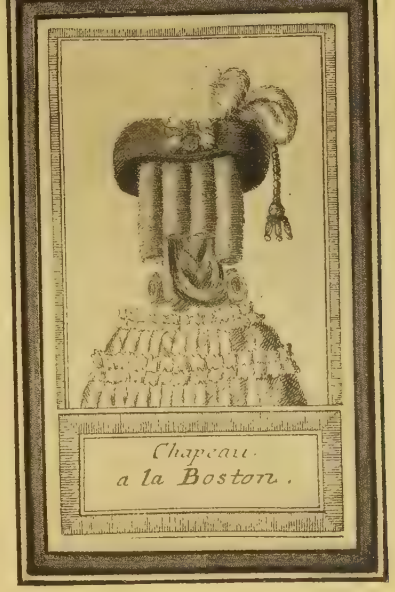
It would be worse than the traditional Irish bull—a wild mixing of metaphors—if we should attempt to combine "fine feathers make fine birds," with the idea that the said fine birds would consent to hide their lights under a bushel. That strict churchman, Abbé Robin, was not deceived as to the purpose inspiring some people to attend divine service: "Piety is by no means the only motive which brings crowds of American women to church. Having no theatres or public promenades, the churches are the only places of public resort where they can show off their new and constantly increasing luxury; they there display themselves arrayed in silk, and sometimes

shaded with superb headdresses, their hair piled up on frames in imitation of the French fashions of some years ago. Instead of using powder they wash themselves with soap, which does not always suit them; they are generally agreeable blonds. The most fastidious are learning, however, to adopt European fashions." This observation concerning the utilizing of church to exhibit one's finery is indorsed by La Rochefoucauld: "All through America it is the great ambition of a new township to build a church; if there be added thereto a good tavern, it acquires a certain standing among other townships not so well provided. Apart from subserving municipal vanity, the church is particularly desired by young people of both sexes, by the young girls especially, who go there to display their carefully made toilettes, and to meet their friends."

Perhaps we have always been a vain people, but is a national vanity to be despised which caused such wide-spread neatness of attire as to elicit the unanimously favorable comment of foreigners? They were quick to notice the absence of those rags which in Europe proved that equality of opportunity did not exist, and that degradation had persisted so long as to create a social caste. "Of all that pleases a stranger arriving in the United States," says Beaujour, "nothing is more pleasing than the external

cleanliness noticeable everywhere, in the streets, the houses and the clothing. Everybody is decently dressed. The men wear woollen suits, the women cloth dresses, generally white, always with clean linen, and nobody is to be seen in public with those hideous rags so distressing in other countries."

No one showed himself better qualified to recognize whence came the fashions which then as always won the hearts of our fair compatriots than the observant priest, Abbé Robin, who "hardly expected to find French fashions in the midst of American forests. The headdresses of all the ladies, except Quakers, are high, voluminous and adorned with our veils. One is surprised to find throughout all of Connecticut so active a taste for dress,—I might even say, so much luxury amid customs so simple and pure that they resemble those of the ancient patriarchs." Chastellux found not only this taste for French fashions, but also a lady champion eager to lead a crusade in their favor, who "has taste as delicate as her health. Excessively enthusiastic over French fashions, she only awaits the end of this trifling revolution now taking place to initiate an even more important one in the customs of her nation." In some centres he fears, however, that the women are going to extremes; for instance, in Annapolis "the luxury of the



Head-dresses of the eighteenth century.

women surpasses that of our provinces. A French hairdresser is a man of importance there; one of these ladies pays hers one thousand écus wages." Baron Closen reports: "The women are very pretty, have good style, and dress excellently—some even following the French fashions." So attracted was he by the appearance of certain fair Americans as to sketch them on the margin of his note-book. Even the serious-minded General Rochambeau could not fail to notice that "the women have taken up French fashions, in which they are deeply interested." St. Méry goes more into details: "Philadelphia women delight in luxuries, such as ribbons, shoes, etc., but no veils or laces, and almost no artificial flowers." Our fastidious visitors were of the opinion that the prevailing luxury in dress did not of itself teach our women how to use it to the best advantage, at least so thought the Prince de Broglie: "The ladies of Philadelphia, although magnificent enough in their costumes, generally do not wear them with much taste. In arranging their hair they have less lightness of touch than our French women. While they have good figures, they lack grace and make their curtsies badly." Although luxury is one of the most difficult habits to break, Brissot shows that our women could and did, when patriotism demanded it, put aside the insidious delights of

dress: "Even in the larger cities Americans are being driven to ruinous luxury; for this reason there has been formed at Hartford, Connecticut, an association of leading ladies who, in order to assist in paying off the Public Debt, agreed at a meeting held November 6, 1776, no longer to buy gauzes, ribbons, feathers, silk or, in general, any articles demanded by foreign fashions."

That women should love dress struck the French as the most natural thing in the world, but that was the only particular in which American women fitted in with the preconceived notions of them entertained by those observers fresh from an older civilization and a stricter etiquette. Of the many novelties that engaged their attention, nothing was more un-European than our attitude toward marriage, not only in respect to the liberty accorded young people while arranging for it, but also in the effect which marriage later had upon the girls themselves. They are almost shocked at the freedom our girls enjoyed, and yet they frankly admit that no harm came of it either before or after marriage, for they settled down more sedately as married women than did the artificially guarded and overrestrained *jeunes filles* of their own country, who looked forward to marriage as meaning freedom from the petty tyrannies of their childhood. Instead of finding marriage ar-

ranged by the parents, according to European fashion, this delicate business, to the surprise—nay, consternation—of the Frenchmen, seemed entirely confided, forsooth, to the young people themselves. St. Méry says: "The choice of a sweetheart is without exception made publicly, and the relatives indulge in no formalities in respect of it, because such is the custom of the country. The chosen sweetheart comes to the house whenever he pleases, he takes his beloved out walking when he likes. Often he comes on Sunday with a cabriolet to fetch her, and brings her back in the evening without anyone asking where they have been. Young people sit up spooning after their elders go to bed, and sometimes a late returning servant will find them both asleep and the candle burned out—so cold is love in that country."

Let us see what use, according to Crèvecœur, the youngsters make of the liberty allowed during this interesting period: "These young people sit and talk and divert themselves to the best of their ability. If someone has lately returned from a cruise he is generally the speaker of the evening. They often all laugh and talk at once, but they are happy and would not exchange their amusements for those of the most brilliant assemblies in Europe. This lasts until the father and mother return, when all retire to their respective homes—the men re-

conducting the partners of their affections. Thus they spend many of the youthful evenings of their lives; no wonder, therefore, that they marry so early." How wisely the young girls set about this important business of choosing a life partner appears from Bayard: "The time which passes between the proposal and the marriage is given over to mutual observation. The girls insist upon an absolute independence which they devote to testing the character of their future husband. They wish to learn if he is bad tempered, if he is constant, if jealousy will not some day render him troublesome or coarse. They yield to every fancy which comes into their heads, and do everything they can to escape the reproach later on of having concealed their imperfections. It is a contest of frankness, inspired by the desire for common happiness." Especially numerous are the remarks made on the fact that young women do not permit jealousy to hamper their freedom before marriage.

Both Brissot and Mazzei make vigorous attacks upon the hard-hearted bachelors, the former admitting, however, that "luxury is already developing in this city a very dangerous class of men, bachelors, for the extravagance of the women makes them fear marriage." And Mazzei adds: "As for bachelors, who should be rarer here than in Europe (and for well-known reasons),

they are more numerous in Philadelphia than in any other American city, while in other parts of Pennsylvania they are no rarer than elsewhere." He goes on to tell how small is the risk which bachelors are running, because they are treated so frankly and no attempt made to deceive them: "The young girls and men see each other every hour of the day, and that too without masks; they do not marry unless both are pleased, and don't postpone until too late the discovery that they have been deceived. The object of both sexes is to learn each other's character. It does not appear that beauty alone is a particular attraction to young men of wealth, neither is it rare for a girl to refuse a man whose face and fortune are his only recommendations."

How much freedom they enjoyed after they had made their choice is clear from Brissot: "You will see a young girl drive off with her sweetheart in a light carriage, and injurious suspicion never interferes with the pure pleasures of this trip into the country. When they are mothers, Boston women become reserved; their manner is always, however, open, kindly, and communicative. Given over entirely to housekeeping, they busy themselves solely with making their husbands happy and bringing up the children." Rochambeau gives a hint that unmarried girls confined themselves strictly to the

business in hand, and did not waste time on married men: "The girls enjoy the utmost freedom until they are married. Their first question is to learn if you are married; if you are, the conversation falls flat; once married, they give themselves entirely to their new authority." Of a certain Virginia dame Blanchard relates that "they say she is rather gay, which is rare in America; but then," he adds, "she was born in Europe and did not come here until she was seventeen, and seems desirous of going back."

The entire absence among us of the European custom of parents providing their daughters with marriage portions or "dots" excites many comments from our visitors. Crèvecœur explains why this is true: "At Nantucket, as I observed before, every man takes a wife as soon as he chooses, and that is generally very young. No marriage portion is required, none is expected. No marriage articles are drawn up by skilful lawyers to puzzle and lead posterity to the Courts, or to satisfy the pride of the contracting parties. They give nothing with their daughters. Their education, their health, and the customary outfit are all that the fathers of numerous families can afford. As the wife's fortune consists principally of her prospective economy, modesty, and skilful management, so the husband's is founded on

his ability to work, his health, and his knowledge of some trade or business."

Not only was this true of New England, but also in Maryland, says Bayard, who sets out very clearly the many advantages of our system: "They give their daughters at marriage a small trousseau and the slave who was the companion of her infancy. I wish this were also true in France, for there you can wager a thousand to one that a rich girl will be married by a man of no delicacy of feeling, but who is in love with her dowry. The victim of his cupidity, no longer loved by the vile speculator, will have nothing in exchange for what she gave him but long sad years. In the United States the adventitious circumstances of fortune, with few exceptions, are subordinated to morality, and the two sexes get along very well together. There, marriage is a matter of sentiment, and the happiness of the family is of the first importance, so that purity of morals takes care of itself without need of appealing to a magistrate. All the children are brought up in the bosom of a worthy family, happy in the harmony thereof, and instinctively organize themselves for that state of felicity, and become virtuous when they are grown up."

Perhaps the greatest surprise of all the bewildering ones that marriage *à l'américaine* seemed to furnish our friends from the Old World was the

steadying effect its responsibilities obviously had upon those very maidens whose freedom from all restraint before marriage seemed destined to make them unruly after that ceremony. We must remember that it was still the golden age when everybody married young, and generally "lived happily ever afterward." Crèvecœur is but one of many to remark how young they married: "A general decency everywhere prevails; the reason, I believe, is that almost everybody here is married, for they get wives very young and the pleasure of returning to their families overrules every other desire." The Comte de Revel, although less than a month in America, felt qualified to remark that "in general the married women are more reserved than the unmarried ones." How opposite was this state of affairs to that existing in Europe appears from Mazzei: "In certain European nations girls must be extremely reserved, and especially so with young men, but once married they do not bother themselves so far as anybody is concerned. In America, on the contrary, girls have a good time with the young men, but married women are reserved, and their husbands are not so familiar with young girls as before they were married."

"Because girls may go unattended to parties," says Perrin du Lac, "married women seldom go.

As custom does not require them to accompany their daughters, they generally prefer to stay at home and busy themselves with their other children or the care of their households." Bayard also bears witness to the admirable manner in which married women discharge their new duties: "When girls are called to undertake the duties of mothers and wives, they seem filled with all the dignity of their new state. The airs and graces of youth give place to a reserve, or rather to a delicious withdrawal, the proof of a contented soul enjoying in silence the happiness which it absorbs. They carry out with fidelity the promise of obedience which they make at the altar. I have seen women whom fortune, health, and beauty tempted to every pleasure, but who preferred their duty to all of them." And how seriously they took these new responsibilities was noticed by Crèvecœur: "But no sooner has this ceremony been performed than they cease to look so merry and gay. The new rank they hold in society impresses them with more serious ideas than were before entertained. The title of master of a family necessarily demands more solid behavior and deportment. The new wife follows in the trammels of custom, which are as powerful as the tyrannies of fashion. She gradually advises and directs; the husbands, equally obedient to the ancient habits of their country, submit without feeling

any impropriety in so doing; were they to act otherwise they would be afraid of subverting the principles of society by altering its ancient rules; thus both parties are perfectly satisfied, and all is peace and concord." Ségur "saw several ladies worthy of admiration for their agreeable and sprightly manner in society. Lacking the grace of our French women, they nevertheless had their own which, for being more simple, was none the less attractive."

Beaujour tells us that in our land of many religious sects and much religious freedom, the wives generally changed to the religion of the husband. But they were free to do as they pleased, as Michaux (junior) points out: "Although divided into various sects, they live in great harmony, and difference in religion is no obstacle to marriage; husband and wife each attend the service they prefer; this also applies to the children when they grow up, and that too without the slightest interference from their parents." "Often I observed this spectacle," says Talleyrand, "for which nothing to be seen in Europe had prepared me—in the very same house father, mother, and children following peaceably and without opposition the religion each preferred. Sundays the whole family starts out together, but each person goes to his own church."

St. Méry reports an amusing local custom which

obtained in Philadelphia: "For three mornings after marriage the wife serves punch and cold refreshments to all her friends; for the three next days she gives tea in the evenings, her bridesmaids assisting her."

Balch says of those ladies of long ago: "They bring up their children with care, and pride themselves on scrupulous fidelity to their husbands." We, the children in later generations of the children whom these ancestresses reared, must be pardoned an especial interest in what the French had to say about the way it was done: "Children are carefully brought up in the paternal mansion; there they enjoy the greatest liberty and but little attention is paid to them. They go and come without being subjected to annoying questions or forced to make ceremonious grimaces called politeness. They are somewhat importunate, and very frank. But although they are happy while in the bosom of the family, the age of iron succeeds rapidly to that of gold"—meaning thereby that schoolmasters were overstrict. St. Méry finds children are particularly well treated in Virginia, and Bayard observed a pleasant instance of their precocity at a country house near Winchester in that State: "Dinner hour having sounded, we sat down at a round table, his daughter, nine years old, doing the honors very gracefully in the absence of her

mother." Dupetit-Thouars exclaims, "New England is the home of pretty children," and gives such a charming description of them as to make it clear that he really loved them. One and all agree that American children were badly spoiled, and perhaps there are some of us to-day who will admit that our customs have not been noticeably rectified in that regard. Very much in point is Chastellux's anecdote of how thoughtlessly the Schuyler children wounded the feelings of the English prisoners temporarily lodged in their home: "The second son of Mrs. Schuyler, seven years old (a spoiled child as are most American children—self-willed—now spiteful, now amiable, running about the house all day), shouted with laughter on seeing the Englishmen and, slamming the door on them, cried out, 'You are all my prisoners.' This naive remark was cruel for them, and made them sadder than they were the day before." To this anecdote he adds the following general statement: "In America, as in England, parents spoil their children when young, and abandon them to themselves as soon as they are grown up, so that in those two nations, education has never been either as carefully conducted or as prolonged as it should be. Indulgence of their children when they are small makes them petty domestic tyrants; negligence during their youth makes strangers of them." It is refreshing

to turn from this last comment to a delightful bit from Beaujour: "American children are almost always prettily shaped, with blond hair, and with the freshness of budding roses, and they sparkle in the streets of American towns like field flowers in the springtime."

CHAPTER IV

WHAT OUR ANCESTORS ATE AND DRANK, THEIR CUSTOM OF TOASTS, ETC.

What more inspiring rendezvous can we have for this incursion into the long ago than the dinner-table of George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the American forces. The engaging Marquis de Chastellux shall be waiting there to greet us, and take up the narrative: "On our return to camp we found a good dinner ready waiting and about twenty guests. The repast was in English fashion, composed of eight or ten large dishes both of butchers' meat and chicken, accompanied by vegetables of different sorts, and followed by a second course of pastries, comprising everything under the two denominations of 'pyes and powding' [*sic*]. After these two courses they removed the tablecloth and served apples and a quantity of nuts, which George Washington generally ate for two hours, meanwhile proposing toasts and indulging in conversation. These nuts are small, dry, and covered with so hard a shell that only a hammer can

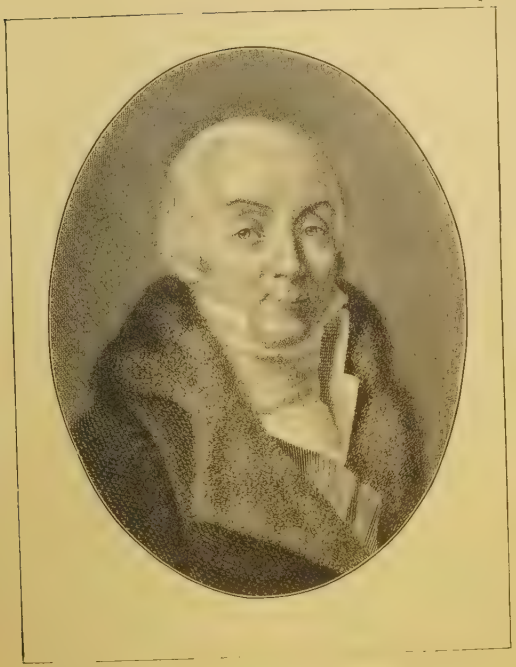
break them; they are served half open, and are then picked out and eaten. About half past seven we arose from the table, and the servants at once came to take it down and shorten it, as it had been lengthened for dinner. I was astonished at this manœuvre and asked the reason. They told me they were going to lay the cloth for supper. At the end of half an hour I retired to my room, thinking that the General might have something to do and was only remaining with the company out of regard for me, but half an hour later they came to announce that His Excellency awaited me for supper. I returned to the dining room protesting with all my might against this supper, but the General said that he was accustomed to take something in the evening, and that I need only sit down, eat some fruit and take part in the conversation." This long stay at table had a convincing apologist in the Comte de Ségur: "Temperance was one of Washington's virtues, and in prolonging his dinner he had but one object,—that pleasure of conversation which distracted him from his worries and rested him from his labors. His table was set every day for thirty. Washington, animated by a singular and most disinterested love for his country, declined to receive that which they had assigned him as Commander-in-Chief. It was almost in spite of him that the

government charged itself with paying his table expenses." When Blanchard dined with Washington, he especially noticed that meat and vegetables were served together on the same platter, and that the salad dressing was of vinegar without any oil. Lieutenant-General Mathieu Dumas was another who partook of one of Washington's dinners, "which was remarkably plain," says he. From these as well as from many other accounts of Washington's hospitality (for he entertained all the French officers, and each one seems to have written down his experience), it becomes quite clear that, as head of the revolutionary movement he felt that his was the responsibility of showing official hospitality to the gallant foreigners who had come so far to fight for us. Nor did he fail to perform this duty, and that too, in accordance with the best American culinary traditions. He offered at his table American viands cooked and served in the American manner, and what he and his guests from the brilliant French court ate and drank best tells how people at that time cared for the inner man—plenty of hearty, simple food, washed down by quantities of alcoholic beverages strangely inconsistent with the more temperate tendencies of to-day.

That Washington's hospitality to our foreign guests was not confined to entertaining them

while they were serving our country but also followed them home across the ocean appears from a letter written him from Paris, October 26, 1786, by Lafayette: "I have received the hams and I am much indebted for this amiable attention on the part of Madame Washington. The first one was served three days ago at a dinner composed of Americans, to which our friend Chastellux was invited. They arrived in perfect condition." Of how favorably Washington's hospitality impressed the French officers there are not a few accounts, but only a couple of them enjoyed a similar attention from Mrs. Washington—one was Blanchard, who stopped to pay his respects at Mount Vernon on his way north from Yorktown. He has many amiable things to say of the general's wife. In passing it is interesting to note that although he speaks of Annapolis and Georgetown, there was as yet no city of Washington for him to visit. It is impossible now to think of Georgetown otherwise than as an outlying section of Washington, but this is only one of the many startling differences between then and now in our country. Our assimilative power as a nation makes short work of such sudden changes, nor does it show any tendency to diminish now that we are a world-power, and are commencing to confront greater problems than those around the village pump.

From what we know of the excessive daily consumption of intoxicants in America at the close of the eighteenth century, it seems strange that there were so few adverse comments from our more temperate Latin friends upon their thirsty Anglo-Saxon associates. "My health continues excellent," wrote Comte de Ségur to his wife, "despite the quantity of tea one must drink with the ladies out of gallantry, and of madeira all day long with the men out of politeness." How unusual was water as a beverage is amusingly set out by Mazzei: "They consider port wine and bordeaux as light, and water is banished from every table. A man who arrived a little while ago asked me one day at table how much water cost. When I told him that all it cost was the trouble to fetch it, he added that he had thought it a most expensive beverage because he had not been able to obtain a glass of it without the greatest difficulty, whilst those who ordered wine, cider, beer, grog or toddy were served at once. They call a mixture of rum and water grog, but when sugar is put in it is called toddy. In 1774, finding myself one day at Norfolk at a dinner of thirty-two people, and having asked for a glass of water, I perceived some confusion among the servants, and the water did not arrive. The host, next whom I sat, whispered in my ear, asking with a smile if I could not drink something else, because



Comte de Ségur.

From a portrait appearing in his volume of "Mémoires."

the unexpected request for a glass of water had upset the entire household and they did not know what they were about." That every ramification of human thirst received due attention appears from the following catalogue of beverages—"both hot punch and cold before dinner, madeira or Spanish wine, bordeaux in the summer—spruce beer and excellent cider are served before the wine; formerly English porter appeared there exclusively, but it is now replaced by excellent porter made near Philadelphia, which so much resembles the English that even English palates have been deceived by it. This discovery is a real service to America, for by it they are relieved of a tax to English industry." Revel took kindly to our spruce beer, and adds: "They likewise have a liquor which sells at a high price, and is made of peaches, of which they have a great quantity, although generally bad, as are also their apples and other fruits." Mandrillon tells us that "the ordinary drink of the inhabitants is cider whose excellence equals the best white wine. They import rum from the Barbadoes. Madeira and England furnish them with wines." St. Méry agrees that cider was our usual beverage. None of the French spoke approvingly of our whiskey, in fact they seemed to dislike it, and Perrin du Lac thought it had "the most disagreeable taste of anything I ever drank

in my life. Most of the people partake of this strong liquor, which they distill from rye and corn. The drunkenness resulting from it is disgusting, and its use, no matter how moderate, seems to me strongly to affect nervous persons." To all of the foregoing the only rebutting testimony is the casual statement of St. Méry that Philadelphians drank iced water in summer and made excessive use of hot drinks at other seasons.

Constant are the flattering remarks upon how well our people lived—we shall come to these in detail while considering the various meals then customary. Nor was this comfortable and race-bettering scale of living confined to the wealthier classes—fortunately it obtained in every walk of life, for, says Beaujour: "It must be remarked that the poorest individual, the ordinary day-laborer, is better fed and clad here than in any other country. Every day of their lives they eat more in the United States than in France, and that too of expensive things, and those which elsewhere are considered luxuries. They calculate (based on the receipts of the Custom House) that each man consumes annually ten pounds of sugar, two and a half of coffee, one of tea and about fifteen of molasses." Our citizens were so accustomed to a varied diet and to substantial food that Gérard, the French Minister, reports to his government, September 10, 1778,

that for this reason (and also because of the rise in cost of provisions) "in general it appears, on trustworthy testimony, that a European army of 60,000 men would be well kept on what 15,000 men cost in the United States."

Although the Frenchmen understood and approved the hour and the importance of our dinners, they were surprised, and in some cases obviously shocked by our hearty breakfasts. Says Chastellux of Philadelphia: "The American days begin with a heavy breakfast, and as they dine late some slices of veal in the morning, some cuts of mutton and other trifles of this sort sandwiched in between cups of tea and coffee, never failed of a good reception. This light repast lasted no more than an hour and a half." This hearty American breakfast was hardly to the liking of the French, and among those who criticise it is St. Méry, who says that "in Philadelphia the breakfasts are at nine o'clock. They have ham, slices of bread and butter, tea and coffee." Brissot complains that in Boston "breakfast consisted of tea,-coffee and meats, both broiled and roasted."

Not a few references were made to the phenomenon of coffee with milk in it being drunk at breakfast—amazing to the Frenchmen. "Our supper was frugal enough," says Chastellux, "but breakfast the next day was ample; we had ham,

butter and fresh eggs, and coffee with milk in it as a drink. We had become perfectly accustomed to the American habit of using coffee with milk in it as a beverage while eating meat, vegetables and other food." He agrees with St. Méry that nine o'clock was the correct hour for breakfast in America. Perrin du Lac noticed that "no one takes coffee after meals, but almost all the men drink it during breakfast," and Roux remarked our "immoderate use of tea and coffee at all repasts."

When the French came to speak of our dinner, the principal meal of the day, they treated the subject with the deference and earnest attention which men of their nation have always felt it deserved. The general hour would seem to have been two o'clock—so says du Bourg of Boston, and St. Méry of Philadelphia, although with the latter Chastellux disagrees: "In Philadelphia, as in London, one does not dine until five o'clock and sometimes not until six." Perhaps the fact that Chastellux's Philadelphia friends were more fashionable folk than St. Méry's may explain the difference, although it must be noted that the former gives two as the hour at General Nelson's home. Savarin dined at three in New York. No disagreement, however, existed as to the great length of time spent at table—Lafayette writes to his wife from Charleston, June 19, 1777, that he sat five hours at a great dinner given in

his honor. Du Bourg would have us believe that "most of the time is consecrated to the table."

But let us hear what they ate. We have already seen what was served at Washington's table, but to learn the fare of ordinary folk we will turn first to St. Méry: "Dinner in Philadelphia is at two, no soup, but roast beef and potatoes, boiled or fried cuts, boiled or fried fish, salad, which is sometimes sliced cabbage [he means cold slaw]. For dessert they serve fruit, cheese and pudding. The women leave the table after dinner. All the family silver is always set out on the sideboard." Another Philadelphia menu is given us by Chastellux: "The dinner was served in the American (or, if you please, in the English) style, that is to say, it was composed of two courses, one comprising the entrée, roasts, hot dishes, and the other, sweet pastries, etc. When these are taken away the tablecloth is removed and they serve apples, chestnuts and other nuts. It is then that they propose healths. Coffee, which comes afterwards, serves as the signal for leaving the table." This same author thought as well of Boston dinners as of Philadelphia ones, for, dining one night at Mr. Cushing's in the former city, he says: "On this occasion the Deputy Governor perfectly sustained the reputation to which the Bostonians have every right, that of loving good wine and good food, and of being very hospitable." As to

the length of these Boston dinners he gives a hint when he remarks of one at Mr. Brick's: "There were thirty persons present. After dinner they served tea, and while it was being taken Mr. Brick insisted that we remain to supper."

This same bon viveur heartily approved of the custom American women had of withdrawing after dinner, as appeared from his account of a visit to a Mr. Wilson: "He gave us a very good dinner, and received us with simple and easy politeness. Mrs. Wilson did the honors of the table with all the attention possible, but we particularly appreciated her leaving at dessert; then the dinner began to liven up." Brissot describes a quieter entertainment, this time at a Quaker's house, but there we also find plenty of food, drink, and good cheer, even though the last be in a lower key: "I want to send you a description of a dinner given by one of the richest Quakers during the General Assembly in September,—it affords a curious contrast to our splendid banquets. At that time the Quakers from the country and neighboring cities crowded into Philadelphia; their brothers received and lodged them, and lavished the most affectionate hospitality upon them. About twenty guests sat down to table. The host was at one end and the hostess at the other. Before beginning, there was a moment of silence which the Quakers em-

ployed to give thanks to the Supreme Being. The first course consisted of a large piece of beef placed at one end, a ham in the middle, and a shoulder of mutton at the other, two soups, and four platters of potatoes, cabbage, vegetables etc. They drank cider, Philadelphia porter, and beer. The host, addressing each guest in turn, said 'Help yourself, ask for what you want, and make yourself entirely at home.' The second course consisted of different sorts of pies or pastries, two plates of cream, two of cheese and two of butter. The servant then came to pour out a glass of wine for each guest, but I saw none of that tiresome offering of toasts which is so often a provocation to drunkenness rather than to patriotism. They talked quietly, and it must be admitted that this simple repast did not enjoy the gaiety of our noisy dinners or suppers."

The tone of regret with which even so sedate a soul as Brissot reminiscently refers to the "gaiety of our [French] noisy dinners and suppers" turns our thoughts to the somewhat deliberate merry-making which reigned after an American dinner, as soon as the hour devoted to toasts arrived. Bayard says: "The husbands remain at table long after the ladies withdraw, and this custom is alike in country and city." And St. Méry agreed that "women always sit down first at meals, but always depart the mo-

ment the men announce they prefer Bacchus to Venus." In this connection Mazzei proved a gallant champion of the ladies by recording that "if the men remain at table too long in order to drink more than they should, the women are accustomed to withdraw; 1. Because they are not interested in excessive drinking; 2. Because they have something else to do. The women conduct all the domestic affairs of the house, and generally with much care; all the keys are turned over to them and they take care of everything." It is but fair to point out with Ségur, that these long sojourns at table were necessitated by the elaborate system of toasts then in vogue: "Dinner, which, according to the custom of the English and Americans, lasted several hours, concluded by a number of toasts. The more customary were those to the Independence of the United States, the King and Queen of France, and to the success of the Allied Armies, after which came private toasts, or, as they are called in America, sentimental toasts." That he did not approve of the custom is clear: "Two things, only, shocked me more than I can say, one was the custom, when the time came for toasts, to pass around the table a great bowl of punch from which each guest was obliged in turn to drink." Savarin was much impressed by the size of one of these punch-bowls in New York,

"holding enough for forty people—there are no such huge bowls in all France."

Chastellux approves the patriotic toasts, but does not hesitate to speak his mind freely concerning the tiresome exchange of "individual healths," "The formal toasts, as I have said already, are not at all annoying, and only serve to prolong conversation, which is always more animated at the close of the repast. They do not require one to go to excess, in which they differ greatly from German healths and those still obtaining in our garrisons and in the country. But one absurd and really barbarous custom is that at the beginning of a repast and the first time that one drinks, they call upon each individual in turn to drink his health. It is enough to make the actor of this ridiculous comedy die of thirst while trying to remember the names of all around a table of twenty-five or thirty persons. It is also enough to make the unfortunate whom he addresses die of impatience because he cannot give proper attention to what he is eating and what they are saying to him, being incessantly called at from right to left by cruelly charitable men anxious that he shall notice the compliment he is receiving. The best bred Americans do not approve of this general appeal, and whenever they drink individual healths they do it by groups, four or five together. Another custom is the despair of

strangers—those general and private attacks finishing by regular duels, someone calling out to you from the other end of the table, 'Monsieur, will you permit me to drink a glass of wine with you?' This proposition is always accepted, and when the bottle is passed you must face your enemy (for how else shall I call a man who exercises such empire over my wishes!) wait until he has poured out his wine and has taken his glass, and then drink stiffly with him, like a recruit imitating the gestures of his drill sergeant. However, I must do this justice to Americans, that they themselves feel the absurdity of these usages drawn from Old England."

It is from this same Chastellux that we have a pleasant picture of an evening spent at the board of General Washington—a picture showing how carefully he ordered his toasts: "The tablecloth having been removed, some good bottles of bordeaux and madeira were placed on the table. Every man of sense will no doubt conclude that being a French general under the orders of General Washington, and likewise a good Whig, I could not refuse a glass of wine when he offered it; I will admit that I deserve little credit for complying, and that, though less accustomed to drinking than any of the others, I accommodated myself quite well to the English toast. The glasses were very small, and each poured out the

quantity of wine he wished, without anyone pressing him to take more. The toast is nothing but a halt in the conversation to show that each individual performs a part in making up the company. I observed that at dinner the toasts are attended with more solemnity,—there are several formal ones, and others were suggested by the General and announced by the Aide de Camp, who was doing the honors. Each day one of them is stationed at the end of the table near the General to oversee the service of the dishes and the distribution of bottles. In the evening, toasts were announced by Colonel Hamilton, and he gave them out as they came to him without order or formality. At the end of supper the guests were generally requested to propose a sentiment, that is to say, a lady to whom they were attached by love, friendship, or mere preference; this supper and conversation lasted generally from nine o'clock until eleven in the evening, always informal and always agreeable."

Noticing the importance we attributed to our selection of toasts, the French took pains to learn if it was their king, or the English one who was being accorded this honor and, according to Mazzei, were much pleased by the result of their inquiries: "In America they have always practised the English custom of drinking to the health of the Sovereign after the meal. Before

the Revolution the first health was always for George III. 'The Nation' has taken his place, and immediately thereafter comes Louis XVI. I had the curiosity to ask the citizens of several different States if, since peace was declared there were places where they still drank to the health of George III. They all assured me that they had never heard of it either in public or private houses, but that everywhere they had seen the health of Louis XVI drunk." Blanchard even overheard the negro servants, after a dinner, drinking the health of the French King.

Minister Adet, writing home to the Committee of Public Safety, July 17, 1795, officially recognized the political significance of the toasts then being generally selected, as indicative of the trend of public opinion: "It is enough to read the series of toasts proposed in those two cities (Baltimore and Philadelphia) to judge of the impression made on public opinion by the treaty." The following year (September 24, 1796) he sent his government a list of the toasts at a dinner given him, as showing the state of the public mind. Dupetit-Thouars was the only other Frenchman thoughtful enough to preserve for our delectation a complete list of toasts drunk on a certain occasion: "His Christian Majesty and his better half, the Queen of France, the King of Spain, General Washington, His Excellency the Count

d'Estaing, His Excellency the Count d'Orvilliers, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, Dr. Franklin, President Adams, President Hamcock [*sic*], General Lee, General Gates, Governor Jefferson, Her Excellency Mrs. Washington, and at least a half dozen more to absent ladies and gentlemen—21 in all." Doubtless few if any of our readers would welcome a return to this elaborate system of alcoholic deluge after our repasts, but before becoming too critical of our ancestors, should we not consider if its denatured successor of to-day, after-dinner oratory, is not even more calculated to drive one to drink than the toasts of our early society? How large a part sentiment played in building up that ancient custom may be seen from a little picture left us by the Marquis de la Tour du Pin: "When breakfast (of which we partook in common) was over, he rose, removed his hat, and said in a manner full of respect 'we will drink to our beloved President.' There was no cabin to be found, even deep in the wilderness, where this loving act for the great Washington did not conclude the repast. Sometimes they added the health of 'the Marquis,' for La Fayette left a cherished name in the United States."

Over against this wide-spread use of intoxicants it is but fair as well as chastening to set out the prevalence among our people of the tea habit,

for tea was then not only a beverage, but had also become an established social episode, with an hour set apart to it, and an elaborate and perfectly recognized code of rules. Although the use of tea was not confined to what is now in England the sacrosanct "tea hour," that benignant custom was already firmly established among us. Nor was it limited in duration to one hour, for Balch says: "About five o'clock they take more tea, some wine, some madeira, some punch, and this ceremony lasts until ten o'clock." St. Méry observes: "They drink much tea, sometimes with rum in it." Bayard confirms the statement that the usual hour for tea-parties was five in the afternoon, and he sets out very amusingly the formal etiquette which attended those functions: "I will give the reader an idea of the pleasures of the city of Bath. At five o'clock all betake themselves to tea-parties, where everything is conducted with the greatest ceremony. On the right of the mistress of the house are ranged in a half circle all the women, as well attired as possible. A profound silence follows the arrival of each guest, and all the ladies maintain the gravity of judges sitting on the bench. A mahogany table is brought and placed in front of the dispenser of tea. Silver vessels contain coffee, and hot water which weakens the tea or serves to clean the cups. A

servant brings in on a silver tray the cups, the sugar bowl, the cream jugs, pats of butter, and smoked meat, which are offered to each individual, and with which she must cover her lap. The French are often greatly embarrassed when, with a cup and saucer in one hand, they are obliged with the other to take tartlets, or smoked meat cut in thin slices. An elderly American, to whom this new style of serving tea was inconvenient, after having taken a cup in one hand and tartlets in the other, opened his mouth and told the servant to fill it for him with smoked venison! When everything is ready for the feast the ladies produce their handkerchiefs and spread them out. When you send back a cup you take pains to place the spoon so as to indicate whether you want more, or have had enough. A Frenchman, who spoke no English, and knew nothing of this sign language, was distressed to see the sixth cup arriving for him, so he decided after emptying it to put it into his pocket until the replenishments had been concluded." St. Méry also testifies (this time at Philadelphia, whose ladies "do not excel in dancing, but they know how to make tea") that "the hostess continues to fill up the teacups unless they are reversed, and the spoon put on top." Chastellux speaks to the same effect: "Monsieur de la Luzerne took me to drink tea at Mrs. Morris',

wife of the Treasurer of the United States. His residence is simple but well ordered and neat. The doors and tables are of superb mahogany, highly polished; the locks and andirons delightfully bright; cups set out in a row; the mistress of the house very nice looking and very neatly dressed,—all appeared to me charming. I drank some excellent tea and would have taken more, I think, if the Ambassador had not charitably warned me at the twelfth cup that I must put my spoon across my cup, whereupon this sort of hot water torture was ended. 'It is almost rude,' said he, 'to refuse a cup of tea when it is offered, but it would be indiscreet for the host to offer you more when the ceremony of the teaspoon shows what are your intentions upon this point.'" Dupetit-Thouars soon came to learn that if you did not know the proper signal "you would be overwhelmed with tea!"

Nor was their tea signal understood only in the Middle and Northern States, for Robin found it in Connecticut as well. He also noticed that "they take a great deal of tea, the use of this insipid beverage is the only pleasure they have; there is not a single citizen who does not drink it from porcelain cups. The greatest mark of courtesy is to offer it. In countries where men live on very substantial food and drink, tea may be useful to the health, but I think it injurious to those

where they eat almost nothing but vegetables and dairy produce. Perhaps this is one of the causes why, with a strong constitution and a happy life, they live a shorter time than other men. They also blame tea for the loss of their teeth." So severe is his indictment of tea-drinking that it is only fair to recall in passing that Robin thought our poor bread was even more responsible for the bad teeth than excessive tea-drinking. Volney declares that he has reason to believe that "very hot tea, so beloved by Americans of English descent, contributes to increase their susceptibility to colds."

Chastellux shows that Boston is as fond of tea as its sister cities to the south, though they seemed to take it after dinner rather than as a separate repast. He tells us that at Mr. Brick's house "after dinner they served tea," and of another friend, that "after dinner he took us to the room of his son and daughter-in-law who wished to give us tea," and when he dined with the Marquis de Vaudreuil —"after dinner we went to take tea with Monsieur Beaudouin"; Du Bourg says that, "in Boston they take a great deal of tea in the morning," so we can see that somebody or other must have been busy drinking tea during every hour of the livelong day.

It seemed also to be an important factor at picnics, for Brissot tells us that "one of the principal

pleasures of the dwellers in these cities consists of parties in the country with their family or some friends. Tea is the basis of these, especially those which take place after dinner." Of course so thorough an American as Washington did not disregard this national beverage, and Chastellux records of one of his days spent at headquarters: "The dinner was excellent, tea followed dinner, and conversation followed tea." This discussion of the Chinese herb's wide popularity helps us to realize how self-denying was the patriotism displayed at the famous Boston Tea-Party—they did not hesitate to "mortify their appetite" for tea in order to decrease the revenues of the English Government and merchants. Chotteau recognizes this: "They all drink tea in America as they drink wine in the south of France. Tea enters into the daily bill of fare. It was on every table but the Colonists banished it with enthusiasm, and dried raspberry leaves were offered to delicate palates—a detestable drink—which they had the heroism to find good."

So much for the principal repasts of the day, and now we come to supper, which, according to Chastellux, "is not the important meal of the Americans." Balch, to the same effect tells us that "at ten o'clock they sit down to table and there is served a supper which is less considerable than dinner." Chastellux while stopping in the

country house of Mr. John Tracey, near Portsmouth, New Hampshire, found that: "At ten o'clock an excellent supper was served; we drank very good wine. About midnight the ladies withdrew, but we continued to drink madeira and sherry. Mr. Tracey, following the custom of the country offered us pipes." One day in Boston he was invited to Mr. Brick's house, and "supper was served exactly four hours after we had risen from the table. It can be easily imagined that we took practically nothing. Nevertheless, the Americans did very well at it. In general, they eat less than we during a single meal, but they eat as often as they wish—a custom which I consider very bad." Blanchard also noticed that although "they sit down so frequently at table, nevertheless, they are not heavy eaters." Another pleasant contribution to our supper literature is from Chastellux, after a day spent with General Washington: "The General said that he was accustomed to take something in the evening, and that if I would sit down I need only eat some fruit and join in the conversation. The supper was composed of three or four light dishes, of some fruit and above all, a great abundance of nuts which were no worse received in the evening than they had been in the morning. The tablecloth having been soon removed, some good bottles of bordeaux

and madeira were placed on the table." Chastellux also noticed that the popular pastime of proposing toasts was sometimes indulged in after supper just as after dinner.

Of all the numerous comments made by the French upon American food, none are more significant than their decided expressions concerning our excessive meat eating, the poor and (therefore perhaps) little eaten bread, and the fact that our people lived well every day and all the time, regardless of whether they had guests, or whether or not it was a holiday. As to meat, Mazzei tells us: "At 37° and 38° of latitude they are often, during the summer, more carnivorous than the English. They mix butter with their meats, and put a great deal in almost all their dishes." Brissot found meat so important a part of our diet as to authorize his comment: "In America pork and beef do the honors of the table the year round." He adds: "Fresh meat must be much dearer in the country where the houses are more scattered, than in the city where the everyday needs demand the regular services of a butcher." It is difficult to reconcile his use of "dear" with another comment of his: "Breakfast consisted of tea, coffee, meats, both broiled and roasted, and cost ten cents, Massachusetts money, for each traveller." He not only finds our fresh meat excellent, but also reports that:

"One sees salt beef of theirs which has travelled to Bordeaux, to the East Indies, to the West Indies and after its return to Boston is still as good as ever. They have tried this salt beef at Marseilles and on French ships elsewhere, and it is beginning to be highly esteemed. Being cheaper than that of Ireland, it will no doubt soon have the preference." An illuminating conclusion from Balch compares our consumption of meat with that of bread, both in striking contrast to the customs of the French: "Dinner, which is generally at two o'clock, is composed of a great quantity of meat. They eat very little bread." This comparison is elaborated by Beaujour: "In France each individual, taken one with the other, children and adults together, consumes a pound of bread a day and a half pound of meat, or other food which replaces it. An American consumes hardly half a pound of bread, but on the other hand, at least a pound of meat, without counting in other substantial foods, such as butter and potatoes, which form at least a quarter of his food." St. Méry records that "Americans eat as much meat as the English, and more meat than bread. They eat seven or eight times as much meat as bread."

Du Bourg noticed that in Boston "they ate very little bread." Chastellux says that: "At Bullion's Tavern, Baskenridge, New Jersey, the supper

was so good that one thing alone was lacking, and that was bread. They asked us which sort we wished, and at the end of an hour they gave us what we asked for. In America they often substitute for bread little biscuits that are easily made and cooked in half an hour." Our bread was one of the few American products of which the French consistently vouchsafe no word of praise—for them it was always bad. Even so experienced a campaigner as Blanchard could eat it only after it had been toasted! While travelling in Maryland du Bourg reports: "Their only grain is Indian corn, which accounts for their eating only that kind of bread—the meanest and worst in the world." Fersen noticed that "in Virginia the people eat nothing but a cake made of Indian corn flour, which they bake before the fire; that hardens the outside a little, but the inside is only uncooked dough." Revel, recounting his experience at Yorktown, brings perhaps the most serious charge against our shortcomings as bakers: "This part of Virginia appears in general to be unhealthy; all the inhabitants that we have seen around our camp had thin, pale faces. It is possible that their food is partly to blame, for they not only eat no bread, but there are some of them who never even heard of it. They make a sort of biscuit on the hot cinders with corn meal, which they

cultivate in great quantities. They consume a large amount of dairy products and potatoes, which are excellent. They prefer them to bread." Robin joins in this general attack on our bakers by alleging that "the women, generally very pretty, are often deprived of these precious ornaments (teeth) at eighteen or twenty years of age," and adds, "I presume this to be the effect of hot bread. The English, Flemish and Dutch preserve their teeth a very long time. The inhabitants of Connecticut, who have such fine wheat, nevertheless do not know the precious art of making it more digestible by kneading and fermentation. Whenever it is required they make a cake which they put to half-cook on an iron plate; the French who went to the war in America could not become accustomed to it, and taught them to improve on it a little. It is to be found passable in the inns, but still very inferior to that of our Army."

American bread was not the only thing to benefit by coming into comparison with French culinary standards, for they also introduced a number of gastronomic combinations unknown on this side of the ocean. Savarin notices that those of his fellow émigrés "who possessed any talent for the alimentary art draw precious support therefrom." "On reaching Boston I taught Julien the caterer to broil eggs with cheese. This dish, new to Amer-

icans, became quite the rage." "Captain Collet also made lots of money in New York in 1794 and 1795 by preparing ices and sorbets for the inhabitants of that commercial city. The women, especially, never tired of so novel a delight—nothing could be more amusing than their little grimaces while partaking thereof. They were at a loss to understand how it could be kept so cold when the Réaumur thermometer registered 26 degrees."

The French did not fail to recognize the importance so widely accorded "in our midst" to pie, which they generally rendered "pye," although Volney writes approvingly of "paie (pye) de pumkine!" It is almost needless to say that our maple sugar, and especially the extraction of the maple sap from the trees, excited the liveliest interest, and not a few regrets are expressed that we did not export that dainty to France. One would infer that the Duc de La Rochefoucauld was possessed of an exceptionally sweet tooth, so full of detail is his description of the preparation of maple sugar.

Almost no mention is made of the eating of fish, although they were quick to notice our liking for oysters. St. Méry tells us "Americans are crazy about oysters, which they eat at all hours, and even in the streets. They hawk them about the streets with lamentable cries until 10 P. M." Mandrillon reports that the oyster trade of New

York City employed two hundred boats. Bourgeois says: "The inhabitants of New Rochelle (N. Y.) live off a sea shellfish called lobster, and also black fish, the only fish caught there."

Turtles pleased our visitors greatly, so much so that, according to Chotteau, the French officers "in Philadelphia ate excellent turtles, and therefore at table, thanks to the numerous toasts, time passed quickly." While at Providence Blanchard relates. "That same day I was invited to a party in the country—a sort of pique-nique [*sic*] given by about twenty men and a group of ladies. The purpose of this outing was to partake of a turtle weighing some three or four hundred pounds brought by an American ship from our islands. The meat did not strike me as very pleasing, but then it was not well prepared." Savarin, while in New York, frequented "Little's Tavern, where turtle soup was to be had during the morning, and in the evening the refreshments usual in the United States." This would indicate a different division of the day gastronomically from the one now in vogue.

Captain Bossu was so pleased with the flavor of our wild ducks as to compare it favorably with that of some Rouen domestic ducks of which he had partaken on his way to America. He proved his right to discuss this toothsome subject by pointing out that wild ducks were best during the season

they fed on wild rice, and therefore he urged that swamps in France be planted therewith.

The number of vegetables in common use was restricted—tomatoes were not considered healthy, and Chastellux says we grew artichokes, but did not eat them. Dupetit-Thouars, on the other hand, when complaining of the scarcity of bread, says that it is replaced by vegetables. Brissot makes the amusing statement that "the Americans of the Northern States do not like onions, and only cultivate them to sell to the Americans of the Southern States." Michaux (junior) witnessed a confirmation of this: "Charleston harbor is always full of small vessels from Boston, Newport, New Yorck and Philadelphia, loaded with potatoes, onions, carrots, beets, apples, oats, corn, and hay." In Brissot's description of Wethersfield, Connecticut, we read that it "is remarkable for its immense fields entirely filled with onions, of which they export a prodigious quantity to the West Indies."

But seldom is any mention made of fruit appearing upon the table, although we learn that nuts were well liked, no less a person than General Washington being extremely fond of them. "At dessert," says the Prince de Broglie, "he consumed an enormous quantity of nuts, sometimes for two hours, if the conversation continued to interest him." Savarin commented favorably upon this

custom of eating nuts, and seemed to prefer "coco and ycory [Roux spells it ikery] nuts." He liked them after dinner with his wine, because of their thirst-producing qualities, also possessed by the "welch rabbets," with which he was wont to regale his two fellow émigrés, Vicomte de la Massue and Jean Rodolphe Fehr, at Little's Tavern, in New York. He describes this dainty as "a bit of roasted cheese on a slice of bread. To be sure, this preparation is not so substantial as rabbit meat, but it stimulates thirst, makes the wine seem good, and is proper for dessert in a small company."

Most of the Frenchmen went to America on warships, but those few who came on American vessels received an excellent first impression of our food, by reason of the fare served on board. We may remark in passing that it could not have been easy to victual ships when the westward trip generally took about seventy days. Says Brissot: "The American ships have, as a rule, good provisions in abundance. Their salt beef is almost as good as that of Ireland. We ate potatoes up to the very moment we arrived at Boston. That will doubtless surprise you because the general belief in France is that in the spring they sprout and become bad. Breakfast with tea, coffee, or chocolate; at dinner, meat, vegetables, wine, and beer, no coffee and rarely any liqueur; tea at five or six o'clock;

at supper, eggs and rice,—that was our way of living."

So often do the French comment approvingly upon the general cleanliness of the American people, that we are not surprised to hear from Brissot that "kitchens are kept clean, and do not give out the disgusting smell to be found in the best kitchens of France. The dining rooms, which are generally on the ground floor, are also clean and well aired; cleanliness and fresh air is to be found everywhere." It is distressing to find in Perrin du Lac that "they don't use napkins. They have forks with two prongs that are only used when carving. They eat with their knives, which have rounded ends"—all of which is more of a compliment to our ancestors' manual dexterity than to their manners.

Smoking has become such a recognized adjunct to meals that it is really quite surprising how few are the allusions made by the French to the use of tobacco, especially when one reflects that they were visiting the land which provided Europe with its supply of that "fragrant weed." Bayard tells us that "almost all the men chew tobacco," while St. Méry's remark upon the subject is the most complete of any: "All Americans are smokers, they also chew, and sometimes do both at once, but the American of any class who uses snuff is a phenomenon, and their women

do not deform and dirty their noses as do Europeans." Perrin du Lac found that it was the custom to smoke cigars in American theatres, and he concluded that, in the opinion of our ancestors, "a Havana cigar, a newspaper and a bottle of madeira make up all the delights of life."

CHAPTER V

AMERICAN PHYSICAL TRAITS AND TEMPERAMENT, AND THE EFFECT OF OUR CLIMATE

It was difficult for General Rochambeau, commander-in-chief of the French forces, to understand how a bookseller like Mr. Knox could promptly prove himself an able artillery officer when given charge of that arm of the American service, and also how the American troops, although entirely inexperienced in siege operations, should have so readily adapted themselves to work in the trenches before Yorktown! This also puzzled the Marquis de Chastellux as much as it had his chief. To both of them, carefully trained in accordance with the best European military system, it was inconceivable that any one lacking such professional training should, by reason of a certain natural equipment, achieve distinction in the art of war. That natural trait has since come to be recognized as American adaptability, and it is credited to us as a great national asset. Crèvecœur realized, thanks to his long residence among us, that novel conditions were

generating changes in our physical traits: "The American is a new man who goes upon new principles. Most of them, therefore, entertain new ideas and develop new opinions. From involuntary idleness, penury, and useless labor he has passed to toil of a very different nature rewarded by ample returns. This is an American." And Talleyrand, the ablest of all the French who visited us, foresaw that we "will one day be a great people, the wisest and happiest on earth." General Victor Collot looked so far into the future as to feel that "America seems destined to play a leading role a few years hence in the politics of Europe."

The ready adaptability of the American to any new condition that might arise, plus his quickness of mind, elicited numerous favorable comments from the French. Brissot is one of the many to speak of our inventive ability, already beginning to show itself, but he was disposed to credit this gift to Mother Necessity, coupled with certain climatic influences. Perhaps if he could to-day witness the amazing number of patent applications pouring into our Patent Office, he would realize that he had unwittingly remarked a strong racial trait which was to persist and develop long after it had outgrown the taskmaster necessity of those early colonial struggles.

It was but natural that this quickness of mind

should sometimes strike a foreigner as productive of excessive curiosity, and à propos of this, Chastellux is in his best vein when repeating a traveller's tale anent this tendency of our forefathers: "He says the Americans are the most inquisitive people he has ever seen. Their curiosity, according to him, is pushed almost to impropriety. When he asked his way they only answered, 'you apparently come from Philadelphia.' When dying of hunger and thirst he demanded food, instead of serving him, they said, 'you seem to be in a great hurry, is there anything new in the North?' He also relates that Mr. Franklin (who possessed a sense of humor in addition to that habitual calm which so surprised the Europeans) whenever he was travelling in Connecticut, a section noted for its curiosity, was accustomed when he entered an inn to call all the family together and announce in a loud tone, 'I am Benjamin Franklin, I was born in Boston, I am a printer by trade. I am coming from Philadelphia and I am going back there at such-and-such time. I do not know anything new, and now, my friends, will you tell me what you can give me for supper?'" It seems almost a pity to attempt any rebuttal of so good a story, but it is only fair to our ancestors to quote from General Moreau in their defense: "You arrive at a place, or change your domicile, or set out on a journey, but no one

bothers himself about you." And Hilliard d'Auberteuil insists that "one never sees there, as in European cities, inquisitive idlers, hanging about public places on the lookout for news, or amusing themselves by staring at newly arrived strangers." On the other hand, Bonnet notices that "New Englanders are inquisitive, especially to foreigners."

Strangely enough, although references are constant to our climate and its effect in developing a distinct American type, very few differences are described between European climate and ours, except by Volney, who visited us in 1795 and devoted two whole volumes to "the climate and soil of the United States." Fersen says of Newport that "the climate is superb," but then adds that the heat there in August reminds him of Italy. Perhaps the most striking of Volney's observations is as to "the amount of electric fluid with which the American atmosphere is impregnated to a greater proportion than that of Europe; there is no need of mechanical or artificial apparatus to make this sensible—it is sufficient to draw a silk ribbon rapidly across some woollen stuff to have it contract far more quickly than I have ever seen it do in France." He finds the most salient difference between the climates of America and Europe is that "there is no spring in the United States, and one passes

abruptly from rigorous cold to violent heat, accompanied by the strange circumstances of a cold wind and a burning sun, a winter landscape and a summer sky." Pontgibaud is another of the few to notice the remarkable brevity of our spring, and also the delightful superiority enjoyed by our bright, clear autumns over the gloomy weeks which generally mark that season in Europe: "A peculiarity of the climate of this country is that often there is no spring, and owing to this absence of one of the pleasantest seasons of the year you pass straight from a long, hard winter to weather of insupportable heat which has followed, without any intermediate gradations, a severe frost. The autumns, on the other hand, are long and very fine." The Marquise de la Tour du Pin, on their farm near Albany, remarked that "it is interesting to record how suddenly spring arrives in these latitudes. Early in March the northwest wind, after having been in complete control all winter, stopped abruptly. The southern breezes began to be felt, and the snow melted so rapidly that in two days the roads were transformed into torrents. In less than a week the fields turned green, and the woods were filled with innumerable wild flowers unknown in Europe."

And now for a surprise—the French thought us a phlegmatic people! "Coldness and reserve

seem to me to be characteristics of the American nation," says Deux-Ponts. "They appear to have little of that enthusiasm which one attributes to a people fighting for their liberties." Roux, who, visited America in 1784 concluded that "physical and moral causes will always prevent them from becoming conquerors, unless their population suddenly increases through circumstances impossible now to foresee." Minister Fauchet and his fellow Commissioners, writing home April 19, 1795, report that "Americans are cold by nature, . . and don't care to take part in public demonstrations or in processions." "The calm tranquillity with which they argue their cases," says Perrin du Lac, "cannot fail to amuse a stranger. Even in the most important affairs you will never see the speaker move head or hands, nor will he by the slightest inflection of his voice indicate that he is more aroused at one time than another." After upbraiding us for our "dull spirit and soul without energy," Beaujour adds: "But it is to be hoped that their temperament will improve with their climate, and that the American will one day acquire more vivacity of spirit, and more strength of character." Robin says that our "climate afforded but little energy," and it must have been disheartening to our forefathers to learn of his fear that our climate must limit our future greatness. The antidote which he sug-

gests for the said climatic handicap would hardly suit temperance societies: "The indolent, passive character of this people arouses the fear that they will not arrive at the world power which so many advantages promise them. But this character is due to customs, to climate, and to food which some day will change. Unsubstantial food and drinks but slightly alcoholic (and, therefore, dissolvent rather than digestive) must necessarily relax the fibres, give a slower, more uniform circulation to the blood, and therefore cause a mentality less active, and an imagination less animated, a greater reserve and a calmer character. But when a numerous population shall have cut down these immense forests, the soil opened up to the sun with a freer and less rarefied air, new forms of agriculture and a greater commerce will increase the use of alcoholic liquors and cause a closer communication between men now widely separated—all these will awake and excite the passions, and then the Americans will reveal all that of which they are capable." Strange theories these to be advanced by a chaplain of Rochambeau's army!

So lazy were our forebears, according to Blanchard, that "during the winter they go out but little, and pass whole days together sitting in the chimney corner or beside their wives doing nothing, not even reading, so that, to escape

boredom, they have to partake of frequent meals." Roux complains that "they are only willing to work two or three days a week." "The Americans were, as a rule, lazy," says Fersen, and most of the French seem to agree with him and Blanchard, Hilliard d'Auberteuil being one of the very few to come to our defense: "Lazy men are extremely rare," says he, "they have not yet had time to acquire the habit of laziness." Although Volney asserts that they "did not rise early in the morning," and were "naturally cold and phlegmatic, slow and taciturn," he admits that "once up, they spend the entire day in an uninterrupted round of useful occupations." Crèvecœur, who lived longer among us than any of the others, and whose opinion has therefore a peculiar value, holds an entirely opposite view and believes that Europeans became "tuned up" after arrival here, nor is this the only point upon which he was nearer right than those of his countrymen who had but a few weeks or months in which to observe us.

Although our ancestors struck the Frenchmen as being phlegmatic, this astonishing observation will be partially explained if we remember who it is that is speaking, and reflect that we are listening to comments from members of a Latin race upon an agglomeration of Anglo-Saxons, even the liveliest of whom must seem oversteady to a Latin. Per-

haps the most Latin of all the comments is one from the pen of Bayard: "The phlegmatic inhabitants of the New World seem to lack that delicate organization which gives foresight. One must actually beat upon their nerves to make them vibrate, whilst in France it is enough to touch them with the finger tip. But, on the other hand, they reproach us with the short duration of our emotions."

It is difficult to understand how they could so constantly accuse us of sluggishness, especially as their conclusions seem so seldom justified by their premises. Take St. Méry, for an example —notice the conclusion with which he starts, and then his basis for it: "Man receives from this climate an effect which deprives him of a part of his energy, and which disposes him to indolence, but that does not prevent him from being quarrelsome, and the quarrel generally ends in a boxing match. Boxing has its laws and regulations. The two athletes choose the place of combat. They undress themselves so that nothing but their shirts remain on the upper part of their bodies, and roll their sleeves up above the elbows. Then on an agreed signal, they rush at each other, deliver blows on the chest, head, face and stomach—blows the sound of which no one could imagine who had not attended such a spectacle. After each new shock they draw back

and separate. If one of them falls during one of these attacks his adversary does not touch him so long as he is on the ground, but the slightest movement he makes to rise, the other has the right to hit him and to knock him down again. Nobody interferes to separate the champions; they make a ring around them, and encourage them,—each, the one in whom he takes especial interest. So long as one of them does not consider himself beaten, the other holds him down and smothers him with blows every time he tries to rise from the ground. As soon as this admission of defeat is secured, the vanquished gets up, dresses himself, and is free to depart until the next challenge—if he has the temerity to accept one. At the end of the battle one of the boxers, and sometimes both, are covered with the blood which they expectorate, vomit, or else lose from the nose. Teeth are broken, eyes are shut by being puffed up, and sometimes the sight is destroyed." Bayard also tells of this same gentle pastime: "The athletes use fists, feet and teeth; they pluck out each other's eyes and this is how it is done;—the champions approach each other, delivering without warning heavy blows of the fist; they entwine their forefingers in their enemy's hair, then, stiffening their thumbs, apply them to the corners of the eyes and make them pop out, amid cheers from a ferocious circle urging

them on. Woe to the careless wight who allows his finger or thumb to get caught, for they will be bitten by his adversary. Every market day we saw crowds form round drunken athletes whom the code of honor forced to box. Frightened women fled from these barbarous pastimes learned from the English. Generally a bruiser (breaker of bones) is judge for the combatants and compels the observance of the rules. You see him marching gravely round the circle and addressing the two champions with an air of authority. It is he who gives the signal for combat or applause. The imbecile crowd has more respect for his orders than they would have for a magistrate. After the combat the friends of the winner surround him, and shake his hands, while others with lemons stop the blood which flows from his nostrils. This personage receives their attentions and praise with the studied solemnity of a theatrical hero."

Needless to say, such acute observers did not fail to notice how differing latitude makes for a difference in temperament between the Americans of the Middle States and those to the north and south. This is how it struck Beaujour: "The men are strong and enterprising in the north, fickle and frivolous in the middle states, careless and lazy in the southern ones. A Bostonian would seek his fortune in the bottom of hell,

but a Virginian would not go four steps for it; an inhabitant of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore does not die content if during his lifetime he has not changed his occupation three or four times! Customs brought from abroad still obtain throughout the northern and middle states. It is not until one crosses the Potomac that these customs, so clearly marked with the traces of colonial manners, appear to have absolutely changed. And whether this change comes about from the influence of climate or negro slavery, it is none the less noticeable in all the usages of life—their commerce is turned over to strangers, agriculture abandoned to slaves, and the proprietor, under the luxurious title of 'planter' concerns himself with his pleasures alone." Chastellux also notices how marked was the difference between the various sections of the country: "If one wishes to obtain an idea of the American republic he must not confound the Virginians (whom a spirit as warlike as mercantile, as ambitious as speculative, brought to this continent) with the New Englanders, who owe their origin to religious enthusiasm. One must not expect to find the same result in Pennsylvania, where the first colonists thought only of peopling and cultivating the wilderness, as in South Carolina, where the production of certain privileged articles turned pub-

lic attention to foreign trade, and established connections necessary therefor with the old world."

Of the climate of Pennsylvania, Brissot says that it is "less cold than in the northern states, less warm and suffocating than in the middle states, and offers considerable additional attraction." The Comte de Fersen, during his stay with the army at Newport, wrote home to his father, "the climate is superb."

So great was the difference between the colonies that several of these foreign commentators predicted a political disagreement between the people of the north and those of the south. Marnézia thought that if we did not break up into a northern and a southern republic we should end by even a greater division either into many small republics or else into eight separate monarchies. May his forecast never be nearer consummation than it has been up to the present day!

Great as was the difference between the sections in those early days, far greater than to-day, it must not be forgotten that it in no wise affected the unanimity of the colonies in their revolt against the mother country. We modern Americans, a united and homogeneous people, are apt to pass over this surprising fact of our early history. The hereditary Prince of Brunswick told Rochambeau just before the Revolution broke out, that the colonists lacked the

cohesion necessary for a general revolt, and predicted that it would take a whole century to overcome the local jealousies and intercolony animosities. But he was wrong—the amazingly unanimous loyalty to the cause of independence rang equally true in all parts of the land; the patriotism seen at Bunker Hill was no greater than that displayed in the swamps of Georgia, or during the dreadful winter at Valley Forge. Such Toryism as existed seems to have been due to private interest among the aristocratic classes in the cities controlled by the English. Notwithstanding constant temptations to desert the cause of the struggling colonies, seemingly doomed to defeat, Benedict Arnold is alone in his infamy. It does one good to read Rochambeau's account of the spirited refusal of British gold by the American sergeant at the head of the revolted Pennsylvania State troops marching to demand arrears of pay from Congress in Philadelphia.

General Rochambeau observed that "the northern states enjoy about the same temperature as Paris, the middle states that of our southern provinces, while those of the south suffer all the burning heat of the coast of Barbary; from this it results that they enjoy long life in the northern states, shorter in the middle ones, while in the southern states at sixty years of age they are ab-

solutely decrepit." Volney also thought that life was shorter in the south than at the north, and Michaux (junior), while travelling in western Pennsylvania, saw "some old men over seventy-five years of age, which is rare in the Atlantic States south of Pennsylvania." This subject of American longevity was one of great interest to our visitors, and provoked among them a vigorous and somewhat amusing discussion, in which even the tombstones of our churchyards were forced (doubtless with reluctance) to testify against us. It was Robin, one of the earliest to arrive, who set this fashion of noting the ages on tombstones, and from these he deduced that we were an unusually short-lived race. "I had assumed that life would be short, and therefore I examined the cemeteries of Boston. They are accustomed to carve on each gravestone the name and age, and I found there that the lives of most of the male deceased seldom reached fifty years, and I saw very few of sixty, almost none of seventy, and none at all above that." But Brissot, who always delighted to correct somebody about something, rallies to our defense with the aid of even more reliable statistics and gives us rather the better of the comparison in this regard over Europeans: "Abbé Robin says that after twenty-five the American women appear old, that young children die in greater proportion than in Europe,

and that there are few old men. Nothing could be more untrue. I have carefully observed women between thirty and fifty years of age, and found most of them plump and of good health. I have seen some fifty years old who still had a very fresh appearance; one would not have given them more than forty. I have noticed this same good health manifested in women from sixty to seventy, and am speaking now especially of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut women. It is true that in Pennsylvania one does not see the same bright hues on the interesting faces of the Quaker women and girls, for they are generally pale. I have remarked their teeth,—some very handsome ones; there is no rule to be laid down in this respect and American women have the same failing as English women,—they are too fond of hot drinks. Not only is the number of old men greater here than in Europe, as I am going to prove, but these old folk generally preserve their intellectual and often their physical faculties. I am reminded that at Ipswich, in Massachusetts, there is an old Minister who still preaches well although ninety years old. I am told of another of the same age who went twenty miles on foot every Sunday to attend meeting. Finally, there is Mr. Temple, one hundred years old, who died in New Hampshire in 1765. He left eight children, four

girls and four boys, of the following ages, 86, 85, 83, 79, 77, 75, 73." Something of Hilliard d'Auberteuil's concerning the preservation of their faculties by our elderly men is so à propos that we will interrupt Brissot and interject it here: "They become adult at twenty and old at fifty, and they grow to be as taciturn, as our aged folk become loquacious. At bottom their character tends to gravity, and they generally, at that age, have less memory, much more will than thinking power, prudence than reasoning power, moderation than genius; but for those very reasons they are better qualified to guide peoples, and more difficult to subdue." Returning once more to Brissot, he sets out in further support of his contention a table of vital statistics of Harvard graduates and adds, "what you must conclude from all these facts and statistical tables (even if the calculations lack rigorous exactness), is that a man's life is much longer in the United States than in the healthiest country of Europe." St. Méry disagrees with Brissot and supports Robin, whose reliance upon graveyard statistics he approves: "American women are charming and adorable at fifteen, faded at twenty-three, old at thirty-five, decrepit at forty or forty-five, and subject to nervous troubles. To judge from tombstones, Americans generally die between thirty-five and forty-five." Chas-

tellux would seem to side with St. Méry and Robin, for he says of a certain planter: "This Mr. Lambert is somewhat of a phenomenon in America, where longevity is not common. He is eighty-three years old and hardly seems fifty-five." But Mazzei, on the other hand, criticises Chastellux for alleging that longevity is infrequent in America, and the Duc de La Rochefoucauld especially extols the great length of life frequent in Maine. Bonnet, too, specifically states that Americans are long-lived. Volney declares that we suffered from a tendency to catch cold, which he blames to "overheated apartments, balls, tea-parties, and feather beds (sometimes in the German style, *i. e.*, feathers both above and below the body)."

Let us leave them quarrelling among themselves as to how our climate affected us, and turn with a sigh of relief to the peaceful unanimity which characterizes their recognition of its beneficial effect upon Europeans. Blanchard, quartermaster of the French troops, shall voice this general opinion, for he can speak with authority: "When the French army left at the end of 1782, after two and a half years spent in America, we did not have ten sick among five thousand men. This number, less than the proportion of soldiers ordinarily in hospital in France, shows how healthy is the climate of the United States."

Although the French could not agree upon whether or not we lived long lives, they were gracious enough to find us a fine-looking, well-set-up lot. The superior physique of our men, and how well they carried themselves, occasioned general comment, and to this chorus of approval there are but few dissenting voices. Beaujour expresses the opinion generally held by his compatriots when he writes: "The Americans are almost all tall, with good figures, strong well-proportioned limbs, and a fresh, bright complexion, but in general they lack fineness of lineament, and have but little expression in their faces. Although there are few ugly men to be found among them, there are even fewer truly handsome ones. I mean to say, of that wild and striking beauty sometimes seen in the south of Europe, and which served as a model for the most beautiful statues of the ancients." St. Méry agrees that our men were tall and well made, and Bonnet calls us "tall, of good figure, sturdy, and courageous." The Vicomte de Noailles says of American troops that "all are sober and patient, live on corn bread, undergo privations or delays without murmuring, are capable of fatigue and long marches, valuable qualities which make of them a veritably light infantry. Besides they look well, and are most of them handsome." And Hilliard d'Auberteuil says:

"Although Americans of English stock are less robust than most European peoples (owing to the weakening effect of their moist climate), they are more fearless, less sensitive to wounds than Europeans, and more easily healed of them."

From Pontgibaud we learn that these novel physical traits carried with them a certain simple dignity: "Congress then consisted of thirteen members, one from each State of the Union, but men very different from us in their habits and ways. They took their seats in the Congress Hall as unostentatiously as we should enter a reading-room in Paris, and the wisdom of their magnanimous resolutions was often surpassed by the simplicity of their manners." Robin also noticed this dignified simplicity and credits it to our diet, but he says that our food is not sufficiently nourishing, and objects to the insipidity of such of our drinks as tea and milk, and he thinks that we live shorter lives than other men on this account.

Since this worthy chaplain in Rochambeau's army has introduced the subject of the fair sex, let us see how our ancestresses struck the Frenchmen—we find a gratifying unanimity of approval, as was but to be expected from such gallant gentlemen. Nevertheless, they indulge in occasional criticisms as well as a few left-handed compliments. Although Abbé Robin is a priest,

one would think him a judge from the even-handed justice of his conclusions: "American women are tall and well-proportioned, their features are generally regular, and their skins very white, without color. They have less ease of manner than French women, but more dignity. The figures of the men are equally well-proportioned. They have little flesh, and their complexion is rather pale. They are less careless in their dress than the women and very clean. At twenty years the women have the freshness of youth but at thirty-five or forty they are wrinkled and decrepit." Although Perrin du Lac found our women almost as phlegmatic as our men, "I soon noticed that the very first note of a musical instrument sufficed to dissipate that apathy which seemed to affect both sexes alike. The girls danced with a pleasure that showed itself in their faces. The more active and fatiguing the dance, the better they liked it. By nature pale though pretty, American girls for the most part lack that vivacity which is the soul of beauty. Rarely aroused during the course of their uniform lives, they are strikingly attractive only when electrified by pleasure or passion, at which times, they are, so to speak, quite unlike themselves."

Baron Closen admired all American women, but found those of Philadelphia a little too serious, caused, he thinks, by the presence of Congress

in that city. One is moved to query if the good baron was not unduly extending the prerogatives of that august body. Because of St. Méry's long stay in Philadelphia, it was but natural that he should say: "American women are pretty and those of Philadelphia most so; no other city in the world shows such a proportion." While passing through Virginia he thought the women pretty, but was so ungallant as to allege that they had long feet and poor teeth. Bayard, we are glad to report, comes to the defense of the fair Southerners: "Virginia women are tall, well poised, and have much more expression in their faces than other American women. Although they seem better fitted for the fatigues of Diana than the games of Love, they obey the laws of that master of gods and men." Ségur declared himself a partisan of the Boston dames: "Europe offers for our admiration no prettier or more elegant, better bred or more talented women than those of Boston." Beaujour declined to be drawn into these partisan discussions; his opinion of our ladies as a whole, though calmly expressed, is nevertheless flattering: "The women have more of that delicate beauty which is the right of their sex and in general more refinement and expression in their faces. They are tall, and almost all have graceful figures, high bosoms, a beautiful head, and an amazing whiteness of complex-

ion. You may be sure that along with this brilliant exterior there goes the modest air and naive grace which nature lavishes without art, and thus you will get an idea of their style of beauty. But this beauty does not last long; at twenty-five their figures alter, and at thirty almost all their charms are gone." We have already seen that Brissot does not agree with the view that American women fade early, and he argues stoutly against that slanderous allegation. Chastellux gives a hint that stiffness was not a failing of some of our girls: "We were waited on at supper by a young lady of great beauty, named Miss Pearce. She was a neighbor of Mrs. D. who came to see her and to assist in the absence of her younger sister. This young person was possessed, like all American girls, of a very modest demeanour, indeed even a serious one. She was willing to have you look at her or praise her face and even give a few caresses, provided it was not done with an air of familiarity. In fact, bad manners are so unusual in America that these little liberties with young girls are of no consequence and the liberty itself possesses an appearance of modesty which is not the case with our affected prudery and false reserve." Lafayette writes his wife from Charleston, June 19, 1777, that "American women are very pretty, very simple, and of a charming cleanliness."

And now as to the home life of the early Americans—how, if at all, was it affected by these new conditions of climate and environment? Fortunately for the purposes of our inquiries, General Rochambeau not only encouraged his officers to travel as widely as possible, but also gave them especial permission to lodge in private houses whenever the opportunity offered. Says the Comte de Ségur: "This permission gave me the pleasure of observing more in detail the home life of American families. I was enchanted with the simplicity, the purity of manners, and the frank cordiality of my hosts. Their politeness, though unstudied, was but the more amiable for that reason; they had good breeding and pleasant manners; everybody was natural. It seemed as if all their duties were pleasures for them. The spirit among them is that of good sense; reason and goodness dictate their words and preside over their conduct, and it must be agreed that truth and happiness, far from being totally exiled from the earth as gloomy philosophers have said, are to be found everywhere in America." When passing through Dover on his way to Philadelphia he remarks that the neatness of the place proved the order, activity, and intelligence of its people: "Accustomed to the spectacle of our [French] magnificent cities, to the affectations of our young men of fashion,

and to the contrast between the luxury of our upper classes with the shabby attire of our peasants and the rags of our poor," he was surprised when he arrived in the United States to see nowhere such luxury nor such misery. "All the Americans we met wore well-cut clothes, of good stuff, and had good shoes. Their bearing was free, frank, and cordial, removed alike from roughness and studied politeness, and showed them men of independence, but law-abiding, insisting upon their own rights while respecting those of others. Their appearance told you that you were in the land of reason, order, and liberty. I saw with admiration well-peopled towns, cities where everything evidenced an advanced civilization—schools, churches, and universities; nowhere indigence nor rudeness, but everywhere fertility, ease of circumstance, and urbanity. In every individual you met there was to be seen the tranquil pride of the independent man who, subject only to his laws, knows neither the vanity, the prejudices, nor the forms of our European society; such is the picture which, during all my travels, surprised and fixed my attention." In this connection let us turn to Lafayette, sure of a word of kindly appreciation, and read a portion of one of his letters to his young wife: "I am now going to talk to you about the country and its inhabitants. They

are fully as amiable as my enthusiasm painted them. Simplicity of manners, the desire to oblige, the love of country as well as of liberty, and a charming equality everywhere prevails. The richest and the poorest are on a level, and although there are immense fortunes in this country, I defy anyone to find the slightest difference in the manners of one toward the other. Everything recalls English customs, except that there is more simplicity in the homes than in England I am enchanted to find that here all citizens are brothers. They are comfortably off and each has the same rights as the most powerful landed proprietor."

Some unknown philosopher has said: "Be virtuous and you will be happy, but you won't have a good time." Félix de Beaujour might have been that aforesaid unknown pessimist to judge from the following: "Americans in their domestic life possess more of the elements of happiness than Europeans, but in their social life they have less of them and, though it is true that they are free from vexations, they live almost without pleasures. They know nothing of the art of multiplying and diversifying their amusements and the monotony of their life resembles the silence of the tomb." Perhaps the easiest way to explain why the French thought our ancestors' lives lacked amusement is that, from

the Latin point of view, all Anglo-Saxons, American as well as British, take their pleasures sadly. But who shall say if the simple delights of the early American home were not as well worth while as anything the gay court of Louis XVI could afford, even long before the shadow of Doctor Guillotin's dreadful invention fell athwart it.

CHAPTER VI

CITY LIFE, AND ESPECIALLY IN PHILADELPHIA, CHARLESTON, AND BOSTON

On the day "the embattled farmers" began the immortal fusillade at Lexington, the new Yale Stadium, seating 67,000 people, could have accommodated the combined population of Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, which were then respectively 20,000, 25,000, and 20,000 according to Robin, Pontgibaud, and Mandrillon. To perform the same service for those three cities now would necessitate a coliseum seating about 9,000,000, a project which only the Grand Cañon of the Colorado would be able to entertain. Telescopes would be needed instead of opera-glasses, and the spectacle staged for such an audience would have to be on the scale of European army manœuvres. We must not forget that in those early days, according to Bonnet, Bayard, and Brissot, only one-tenth of our population dwelt in cities instead of the 47 per cent of to-day. Nor did the small urban population of these days tend to increase rapidly. Even in

1790, when our first official census was taken, the figures for the five leaders had only reached the following totals: New York, 33,131; Philadelphia, 28,522; Boston, 18,320; Charleston, 16,359; Baltimore, 13,503.

How greatly the Revolution increased the importance of some cities while at the same time diminishing that of others is fairly startling, as we shall come to know when we read of them in detail, and learn how much New York, Providence, and Boston were injured, and how greatly Baltimore, Newport, and Philadelphia were helped. In few cases was the change so abrupt as that in the increase of Providence and the decline of Newport, both taking place at the same time. Some cities made their gains more slowly than others; for example, Brissot notes that just after the war the increase of building in Philadelphia was less striking than that taking place in New York. How rapidly the order of our leading cities was changing appears from comparing the 1790 figures with those given in 1810 by Beaujour: Philadelphia, 120,000; New York, 90,000; Baltimore, 40,000; Boston, 36,000; Charleston, 30,000; New Orleans, 20,000; Washington, 6,000. In passing it is interesting to note that many of the French bear witness that the rural districts back from the seacoast were actually benefited by the war, because of their immunity from

ravages by the British navy, to which the sea-coast was constantly exposed. Colleville, speaking of the number of vessels in all the harbors from the Potomac to Boston, says: "What must not have been their commerce before the trouble. I saw with equal surprise the flourishing condition of the interior of the country."

The French were unanimous in their high praise of American cities and seemed especially struck by three features unusual in Europe, viz., their advantageous location, their straight, finely built streets, and the fact that they possessed sidewalks. This last trait was especially novel to those accustomed to the risks from horses and vehicles constantly run by foot-passengers in the then filthy, crowded, and crooked streets of Paris. In this preference of the French for our cities over those of Europe, Robin joins heartily, for, after reciting the unpleasant sights of dirty European capitals, he says: "All those of America rise proudly on smiling, healthy sites, bathed with pure water, surrounded by fertile fields, crossed by broad, straight streets, ornamented with clean, comfortable, and regular buildings."

That the Americans should consider the comfort and cleanliness of foot-passengers by providing sidewalks for them fills Beaujour with something akin to awe. "Most of the cities are adorned with sidewalks for the convenience of

foot passengers and are all carefully swept and watered during the great heat." "And they even have sidewalks on both sides of the street," writes Bonnet, "and moreover their houses are marked with numbers." "Even though the streets of Charleston were not paved, they were provided with brick sidewalks," says Michaux the younger. Mandrillon becomes enthusiastic while praising the progress of order and decency in our communities as compared with those of Europe: "Each city has commissioners for churches and for schools, pilot-officers for ports, police to clean and keep up the streets, commissioners and inspectors for tobacco and other taxes, judges, night-watchmen, etc., in a word, there reigns so much of order, decency, security, and tranquility in Boston, Philadelphia, Savannah, Charleston, St. Augustine, that no one who visits them but would prefer to dwell in those towns rather than in the best situated ones of the Old World." The effect produced upon the approaching traveller by certain of our cities is recorded by Beaujour: "Boston, New York, and Baltimore, which seem to rise from the bosom of the waters, sloping gradually up over uneven ground, offer an agreeable prospect from a distance." We shall also find similar comments upon the fine site enjoyed by Albany and by certain other towns.

Although theatres at that time played an im-

portant part in the social life of Paris, the Frenchmen have little or nothing to say of theatres in America. The most comprehensive comment is one from Perrin du Lac: "This theatre is large, well-built, and agreeably decorated within; but comedy is here still in its infancy, as indeed are all the fine arts. The plays are all English ones —America has not as yet produced any. Although some of the actors have been to London to develop their talent they have been unable to throw off the phlegmatic—the even character from which they almost never escape. Americans prefer tragedy to comedy, and in the latter seem to take no real pleasure except when it portrays the opposite of their own characters—extreme lightness or excessive stupidity or ridiculous vulgarity. The noise of people coming and going disturbs the spectators, and in spite of notices to the contrary, one often suffers from the continual smoking of cigars. The men keep on their hats and remain seated, but rarely being gallant enough to offer their seats to ladies." Bayard also speaks of a theatre, and yet what he saw could hardly have been more primitive: "Bath has two public edifices, a comedy theatre, and the bathing pavilion. The first of these is a log-house, whose interior accords with the simplicity of its external architecture. We had for our entertainment a wandering troupe of Irish

comedians who had left their country to come here in search of audiences less difficult to amuse than are the inhabitants of the cities, towns, and villages of Ireland; the reason for their emigration gives a fair idea of these poor devils' ability. They were in turn emperors, peasants, or fools, and besides were dying of hunger. Assistance was given them in spite of the severe remonstrances of the Methodists, who claimed that an art so diabolical as the drama should not be encouraged by Christians. The pleasure excited by the talent of these actors was poisoned by the piracies of English playwrights, whose rapacious hands had mutilated the masterpieces of Molière. I explained these larcenies to the visitors here at the springs who thought all the plays were of English origin. Recapitulating the different kinds of recreation which one enjoyed at Bath, I will say then that tragedy, comedy, opera comique, and farce were played for us, that we danced every week, and that tea-parties were very frequent." St. Méry contributes but little to our store of information on this subject, although he reports that at Norfolk, Virginia, a town of five hundred houses and 3,000 people, there was a theatre built of brick, where seats were sold at one dollar or seventy-five cents each. In his article on Philadelphia, dated August 22, 1798, he describes a theatre and says that women

The New Theatre, Philadelphia.

From an old print in the collection of Charles A. Munn. Benches used instead of orchestra chairs.

go in the parterre as well as men, "but not women of distinguished appearance. Women also go in the upper gallery and negroes are not admitted elsewhere." He goes on to say that plays in the English style are "very coarse and their humor is repulsive to French tastes." He also tells of two circuses in Philadelphia. We learn from Robin that there was a theatre at Annapolis, but he does not favor us with anything beyond this bare statement. Beaujour says: "Their national dramas, like Bunker Hill and Major André, do not give one a high idea of their theatre."

Another interesting feature of city life into which unfortunately they also give us but few glimpses is that of clubs. Chastellux speaks of one in Boston: "This assembly was held every Tuesday in rotation at the houses of the different members who composed it. On the day in question it was at Mr. Russel's, a worthy merchant who entertained us admirably. The rules of this club are not burdensome—they only limit the number of courses served at supper, but two of meat being allowed, for supper is not the important meal of the Americans. Vegetables, pyes and especially good wine are not spared. They assemble after teatime, play, converse, read the public papers, and sit down to table between nine and ten. The supper was as informal as if no strangers had been present. Songs

were sung at table and a certain Mr. Steward sang some pretty good ones and that too with rather a fine voice." This was not the only club in Boston, as we learn from Brissot, who also recounts a visit paid to the one just described—"there are several clubs in Boston. Monsieur Chastellux speaks of a private club which was held once a week, to which he was invited. I also have been there several times and have always been intensely pleased with the cordiality of its members to strangers, and the information which they display in their conversation. This club consists of only sixteen members. To join, one must be unanimously elected. Each member can bring one stranger with him. The meetings are held in turn at the members' houses. These clubs no longer hold their meetings in taverns, which is a good thing,—one drinks less and spends less. Madeira is worth four Boston shillings a bottle at the merchants' —at the tavern it costs six." Chastellux also makes brief mention of a club which he happened upon at Salem: "Stopped at Good-hue's inn. There was held in this inn a sort of merchants' club. Two or three of its members came to see me." Although hardly a club, Bayard tells of an edifice which served as a centre for social gatherings: "At Frederick-town almost all the houses are of brick, but the only public building

worthy of notice is the Common House. The children go there to enjoy the innocent pleasures of youth. This building is square in form; it has a small dome, and a peristyle supported by Tuscan columns."

Let us set out with our French friends on a "grand tour" of our cities, but, as already remarked, we must be prepared for strange differences between their order of importance then and now. New York, instead of coming first, must be postponed till toward the close of our itinerary because its occupation by the English during the Revolution prevented its being so well known to the Frenchmen as our other towns. Washington must come last of all because, before 1792, almost at the end of the period we are studying, it either did not exist at all, or else only in the brain of L'Enfant, the French engineer, who drew its ground plan. We must begin with Philadelphia not only because of its relative importance in size, but also because it was so long the seat of the Federal Government. Next shall come Charleston, the great city of the South, due in a measure to its being a convenient port of arrival for westward-bound ships sailing by way of the Azores to avoid the Gulf Stream and the easterly trade-winds of the North Atlantic. Then we shall go north to Boston, the metropolis of New England, and from thence progress

gradually south and west through Newport, Providence, and Hartford to New Haven. Next shall come the interesting Dutch city (for so it seemed to the French) of Albany, and after it we shall see Baltimore, then known for its surprisingly rapid growth. Finally, we shall visit New York and Washington.

And now for Philadelphia, the capital city of the young republic, and what a splendid first impression we shall have as we march in with the French army on its way south to strike the death-blow to English hopes at Yorktown! Every street is gaily decorated, the City Fathers come out to meet us, the air rings with welcome to the gallant friends from across the sea. The eager hope of a glorious triumph soon to come is felt and seen on every side. "Count Rochambeau's army," says Mandrillon, "halted half a mile outside the city, and the soldiers, seizing the opportunity to spruce themselves up, in a twinkling of an eye appeared as neat as for a review in barracks. This was a day of triumph for the soldiers as well as for the spectators. The streets of Philadelphia overflowed with people, and the fair sex were all attired in their most beautiful finery. The French troops marched all the way through the city, preceded by martial music, which added to the brilliancy of the parade. There was no end to the admiration ex-

pressed for the neatness of the soldiers, as well as for the proper pride of their bearing, whilst they, noticing the generous applause, naturally appropriated part of it to themselves. After passing in review before Congress and the French Minister, the troops went into camp on a large plain by the Schulkill." "Congress was in session as we marched through the city," says Deux-Ponts, "we paid it the honors which the King had ordered us to pay it. The Thirteen Members took off their thirteen hats at each salute of the flags and of the officers." "And in the evening while we are enjoying the banquet of 80 covers given by the French Minister, Chevalier de la Luzerne, there is announced [says Blanchard] the splendid news that Admiral de Grasse has reached Chesapeake Bay with 28 ships and 3,000 men. Outside the residence of the popular diplomat the streets are crowded with people shouting for joy."

"Next day [says Mandrillon] the Soisson Regiment went through firing exercise. The scene was embellished by 20,000 persons and many elegant equipages. The picturesque beauty of the locality, the serenity of the day, and the glitter of arms all conspired to make it a brilliant spectacle."

It is no wonder that after so hearty a greeting many of the French were disposed to record friendly pictures of life in that fine old town, nor were any

Europeans better equipped than they to appreciate the comfort and refinement of the life there enjoyed. Bayard comments with a note of surprise upon the social attainments of certain of their ladies, saying they would have been considered remarkable even at the witty and brilliant French court. Chastellux frequently expresses his satisfaction with Philadelphia society, congenial to even so accomplished a courtier as he. Side by side with this gayer life of the capital were to be found the Quakers, the backbone of the colony. This contrast of two types of American citizenship aroused no jarring note. So far from blaming the Quakers for the gravity of demeanor prevalent in Philadelphia, Baron Closen alleges that the seriousness of Philadelphia women is due to Congress holding its sessions there. The effect of Congress upon polite society must have changed, because no such indictment, so far as the author knows, is nowadays brought against the women of Washington. Beaujour, on the other hand, shifts the blame back from Congress on to the Quakers: "All the streets look alike and so do all the houses; nothing could be gloomier than this uniformity unless it be the sadness of the inhabitants, most of whom are Quakers or Puritans." Chateaubriand, too, found the city "cold and monotonous," and disliked the dead level of the housetops unbroken by those "towers which

View of Second Street, north from Market Street, with Christ Church, Philadelphia, about 1804.

crown European cities." Those who even to-day would reproach Philadelphia for its "sabbath calm" should be reminded that the Duc de Lauzun found it so noisy that he was obliged to take refuge at Newport.

The general neatness of the city particularly pleased Perrin du Lac: "The cleanliness of the house fronts adds to their beauty. Saturdays are regularly devoted to washing them down from top to bottom, and the doorsteps and side walls are sponged off as carefully as the interiors of the dwellings." Although Ségur has many flattering things to say of the cleanliness of the city, the simple elegance of its houses, and the easy circumstances of its population, he regrets that there are no promenades or public gardens, and so does de Broglie. Chastellux also complains of this same defect: "It is so lacking in all which serves to make life pleasant that there is not even a single public promenade." Perhaps we shall not feel so distressed in this regard as were Ségur and Chastellux after we have read in St. Méry that "all American women are pretty, but those of Philadelphia most so; thousands of them between fourteen and eighteen years old are to be found on a winter's day on the north side of Market Street from three to five. At least four hundred of those young persons are pretty enough to be followed about if they took a walk in Paris." Although

Talleyrand arrived in Philadelphia full of disgust for the novelties which generally interest travellers, he was very much taken with this city, and admires its harbor crowded with vessels, the wide, tree-bordered avenues, well-built brick houses, often with white marble fronts, the "monumental exchange," the luxurious shops, "as well stocked as those of Paris or London," but he agrees with La Rochefoucauld that living there is too high. It was in this town that on May 16, 1794, Talleyrand signed for its mayor, Matthew Clarkson, the required oath of fidelity to the governments both of Pennsylvania and the United States, promising never to "commit any act prejudicial to their liberty and independence," a heavy draft on the future by a man destined to be Minister of Foreign Affairs for Napoleon Bonaparte.

Most of the Frenchmen spent so much time in Philadelphia, and made so many comments upon its life that we have ample material from which to prepare a synopsis of their conclusions. The problem is not to find enough quotable passages, but to select those sufficiently brief for our purpose. Let us turn to Brissot: "Philadelphia may be regarded as the metropolis of the United States; it is certainly the handsomest and the best built city. It has more wealth, although less luxury. There are to be found there more educated men, more with

political and literary knowledge, and more political and learned societies. There are many other cities in America of greater age; although of more recent date Philadelphia has not delayed to surpass its older brothers." He gives as reasons for the prosperity of Philadelphia its location on a navigable river, the country behind it, and also the climate—"less cold than in the northern states, less warm and suffocating than that of the southern states, offers still further considerable attraction. But I firmly believe it is not only to these physical advantages that Pennsylvania owes its prosperity,—it is to the private manners of its inhabitants and to the universal tolerance which has been known and practised there since its beginning." Mandrillon, de Broglie, du Bourg, and Chastellux comment on the sidewalks everywhere provided for the comfort of foot-passengers, "like London," says the latter. At the same time that Brissot tells us that there were no cafés in Philadelphia, he gives us a peep beneath the surface when he says that Philadelphia is like Europe in its loose living.

Much has already been learned of Philadelphia life from the chapter on Society, because it was in that city and in Boston that the foreigners seemed chiefly to have pursued their studies in that congenial field. So important was Philadelphia at that time, not only to the entire confederation of

the colonies, but especially to Pennsylvania, that it absorbed almost all the urban population anywhere about. Even Pittsburg, now so famous both at home and abroad through its steel trade, is dismissed by Brissot with "it is a pity that Pittsburg is not larger and more populated." Those defects would seem to have been rectified. Even as late as 1796 General Collot found only one hundred and fifty houses in Pittsburg. He thought it strange that although the Pittsburgers dwelt in the midst of forests they preferred to burn coal, and he noted that it was cheaper to send coal to Baltimore than to Philadelphia: "And yet twice as many waggons come here from Philadelphia as from Baltimore."

Charleston, South Carolina, will be our next point, for it would be lacking in respect to our beloved Lafayette did we not promptly acknowledge the importance then enjoyed by that city which gave him his first impressions of the land he was so greatly to befriend. Let us see what effect was produced upon him by the courteous and luxurious folk of that metropolis of the South: "The city of Charleston is one of the prettiest, best built, and most agreeably peopled that I have ever seen." He praises the women, the fraternal feelings of the men, the lack of poor people, and even the inn at which he stopped. He complains, however, of sitting five hours at a

banquet given in his honor. "This charming city is worthy of its inhabitants and everything there announces ease of circumstance and refinement." The day after his arrival was fine. The novelty of everything around him, his room, the bed with its mosquito-netting, the black servants who came to serve him, the beauty and the foreign appearance of the country, covered with rich vegetation which he saw from the windows, all conspired to produce upon Lafayette a magical effect, and to excite in him inexpressible sensations: "All the people with whom I had wished to make acquaintance here have overwhelmed me with politeness and attentions, nor is it the politeness of Europe. I have only praise for the reception which I have had here." Of the charm and wealth of Charleston at that time, Crèvecœur is, perhaps, the best historian: "An European upon his arrival must be greatly surprised when he sees the elegance of their houses, their sumptuous furniture as well as the magnificence of their tables—can he believe himself in a country whose establishment is so recent! The inhabitants are the gayest in America; it is known as the centre of our beau monde, and is always filled with the richest planters of the province who resort hither in quest of health and pleasure. The round of gaiety and the expenditures upon these citizens' tables are much superior to what you would imagine;

indeed, the growth of this town and province has been astonishingly rapid. It is a pity that the narrowness of the neck on which it stands prevents it from expanding, which is the reason why houses are so dear. Charlestown is in the North what Lima is in the South; both are capitals of the richest provinces of their respective hemispheres. You may, therefore, conjecture that both cities exhibit the aspect necessarily produced by wealth. Carolina produces commodities more valuable perhaps than gold, because they are gained by greater industry; it shows also on our northern stage a display of riches and luxury inferior indeed to Lima, but far superior to that seen in our northern towns." Duc de La Rochefoucauld remarks with surprise that all Charleston men over fifty have white hair. Let us hope this phenomenon did not result from the gay life charged against them by Crèvecœur. Mandrillon was as optimistic as to its future, as he was pleased with its present: "It is Charles-town, the capital of the colony, which is really the important market, and which will necessarily be more and more so. It has straight streets, most of them wide, two thousand comfortable houses, and some public buildings which would pass for handsome even in Europe."

Boston, called by Bourgeois "the best-built city of the New World," enjoyed as great im-

portance in the North as Charleston in the South. It is easy to gather from the pages of Ségur why the French were so fond of the capital of Massachusetts: "Boston, which has now for a long time flourished because of its commerce, appears like the ancestor of the other American cities, and at the time that I was there was exactly like some old and large city in England. Democracy has in no wise banished luxury from it. In no part of the United States does one see such ease of circumstances, or more agreeable society. Europe offers for our admiration no prettier or more elegant, better bred or more talented women than those of Boston, like Mrs. Jarvis, Smith, Tudor, Morton." Prince de Broglie also gives a list of the Boston ladies who especially met with his approval, including Mrs. Jervis (with a jealous husband!), Mrs. Smith whose house was one of the most agreeable in town, Mrs. Tudor the most greatly admired of all, Mrs. Temple, Mrs. Morton, Mrs. de Aloys, and Miss Polly Seiff, all of them "very pretty!" As a proof of the luxury displayed in this city possessing "a large number of well-to-do folk, and a few very rich merchants," he cites their fine wines, napkins on the table, everybody drinking out of a glass of his own, and most surprising of all—your plate changed whenever you wished! The Boston women, says he, "are carefully dressed, but without taste, and do

not understand how to arrange their hair. Some have a knowledge of music and play several instruments agreeably; they sing rather monotonously—a mixture of English and Italian methods which is very sweet when the voice is a pretty one." Mandrillon finds the city quite like London: "There is no town in America which is so advantageously situated for commerce as Boston. It had, before the troubles, thirty-five or forty thousand inhabitants of different sects. The accommodation, the furniture, clothing, food, conversation, manners, and customs resemble so strongly those of London that it was difficult to find there anything different to that which always attracts an excessive population of great capitals." Beaujour agrees that "their public buildings either surpass or at least equal the magnificence of those in Europe." The frank Blanchard comments that "there are also some poor quarters which give Boston a less modern appearance than Philadelphia and other American cities." Deux-Ponts especially liked Boston, "which in no wise resembles the other American cities whose plans were prepared with foresight." Abbé Robin has much to say of this metropolis of New England. It is from him we learn that there "the rich cover their floors with woollen or woven carpets, the others with fine sand." Cromot du Bourg also goes into some interesting

Boston—as shown in an early print.

From the collection of Charles A. Munn.

details: "The city of Boston is built as are most English cities,—very small houses of brick or wood, extremely clean inside. The inhabitants live absolutely in English fashion. They appear a worthy folk, and affable. I have been very well received during the few visits I made. They take a great deal of tea in the morning. Dinner, which is generally at two o'clock, is composed of a great quantity of meat. They eat very little bread. About five o'clock they take more tea, some wine, madeira, punch, and this ceremony lasts until ten o'clock. Then they sit down at table and have a supper which is less considerable than dinner. At each meal they take off the cloth for dessert and bring on fruit. Most of their time is devoted to the table. . . . During the morning of May 7th, I saw as much of the town as was possible. It is very large and still shows that before the War it must have been a delightful place to stay. It is in the prettiest position possible, and has a superb port." "One would think himself in a fine European city," says Bourgeois; "the cafés, newspapers, promenades, carriages,—the continuous arriving of an infinite number of vessels from all parts of the world, all proclaim this to be an important capital and the distributing point of a widely differentiated commerce."

Brissot pitches his remarks upon Boston in so

lofty a key that one would think he was about to deliver an address upon its historic Common: "How I loved to wander in that long street whose simple wooden houses border the magnificent canal of Boston, in the midst of those shops which offered me all the products of the continent which I had quitted. How I enjoyed the activity of the merchants, the artisans, and the sailors! It was not at all that uncomfortable and noisy bustle of Paris, not at all that uneasy, busy, eager-for-enjoyment air which characterizes my compatriots, not at all the profoundly bored demeanor of the English—it was the simple, honest bearing, full of dignity, of men who realized their liberty, who saw only brothers and equals in all men. Everything in that street bore the character of a city still in its cradle, but which even in its cradle enjoyed great prosperity. Boston is hardly reborn from the horrors of war, and yet its commerce is flourishing; it has not yet lived out a century, and yet within its boundaries it contains the arts, manufactures, products, sciences, and a crowd of curious and interesting sights." He describes certain local customs of Boston and says that there Presbyterianism has moderated its fierceness.

CHAPTER VII

CITY LIFE (Continued)

Newport, Providence, Hartford, New Haven, Albany, Baltimore, New York, New Orleans, and Washington

The word Newport has to-day a certain esoteric meaning, and as a summer home of "polite society" is altogether unique. Indeed, it seems but natural that this should have been the place for the French to land and spend their first winter, and that the officers, many of them fresh from the court of Louis XVI, should have enjoyed their stay there. But what strikes us as most unnatural is their account of the blight that fell upon Newport soon after the Revolution. Of the halcyon days when that city played host to the French army, Ségur gives us one of his many pleasant pictures: "It was easy for us when we saw Newport to imagine the regrets of the French army upon leaving this charming city where they made so long a stay. Other parts of America were as yet pretty only in anticipation, but the prosperity of Rhode Island was already complete —industry, agriculture, the activity of commerce

left nothing to be desired. The city of Newport, well built, with straight streets, contained a numerous population whose easy circumstances proclaimed their happiness. Charming meetings took place there between enlightened men of distinction and pretty women whose talents embellished their charms. The names and the graces of Miss Champlain, the two Misses Hunter, and several others have remained graven upon the memory of all the French officers." Prince de Broglie makes a delightful comparison between the various charming daughters of Newport, setting off Miss Champlain of the beautiful eyes against the Misses Hunter, "her rivals in beauty and reputation," but preferring the former—"no matter what Fersen says about it," thus showing that the question was seriously debated by the French officers. But Polly Leyton, the Quakeress, "a masterpiece of nature," enchanted them all by her simple graces,—"every time I think of her," says de Broglie, "I decide to write a huge volume against the dress, artificial airs and coquetry of certain ladies whom fashion admires." These and other fair ones, like Miss Spindley and Miss Sylven seemed so to regret the approaching departure of the French army, that it was decided to give them a ball. All the preparations were placed in the hands of Desoteux Cormatin, who later fought for the Vendeans and signed

their peace agreement with the republic (1795), and he succeeded in assembling twenty charming dames and damsels, and the dance and accompanying supper "passed off very agreeably." "I left Newport with regret," says the Duc de Lauzun, "for I had such an agreeable circle there."

The change for the worse set in soon after the war, and so rapid was it that the Newport seen by Brissot in 1788 is unrecognizable as the predecessor of the Newport of to-day: "The State of Rhode Island is regarded as possessing the best harbors in the United States, in fact Newport seems destined by nature to be a considerable port. The harbor is good and fit for the largest vessels. This town played a considerable rôle in the last war. It was then flourishing. The successive sojourns of the American, English and French armies left a good deal of money there. All has changed since the peace. The solitude which reigns there, interrupted only by groups of idlers passing the entire day with folded arms at the street corners, the dilapidation of most of the houses, the miserable supplies of the shops which display nothing but coarse stuffs, packages of matches, baskets of bread, or other cheap merchandise; the grass growing in the Court House square; the badly paved and muddy streets; the rags hung up at the windows, or covering the heads of women, the lank children, or the pale,

cadaverous men whose sunken eyes and shifty look make the observer uncomfortable; all announce misery, the reign of bad faith, and the effects of bad government. I visited the market place. Heavens, how different from those of Boston and Philadelphia! Some mediocre cuts of meat awaited purchasers who never came. I enquired the reason of an American who was well informed on the local situation. He told me that most of the inhabitants lived on fish which they caught themselves, on potatoes, and other vegetables which they raise in their own gardens—few ate meat. The farmers no longer send beef or mutton to its markets. Newport seemed to me a tomb where living skeletons quarrelled over a few herbs. It seemed a city in which pestilence and fire had destroyed both the inhabitants and their houses." By the time La Rochefoucauld arrived, its worst days were over, and better ones already in sight: "Before the Revolutionary War there were ten thousand inhabitants at Newport while Providence had only one thousand; to-day Newport is reduced to five thousand and Providence has six or seven thousand. The cause of this change is the number of rich people which Newport lost by emigration. The families who sympathized with the Revolution left the city when the English were in possession of it, and are established at Providence,

taking all their goods and chattels there; and those who were attached to the English cause followed the English troops when they were forced to evacuate the Island. The political troubles which for a long time disturbed Rhode Island have prolonged and confirmed this condition of distress at Newport, and it is only in the last two or three years that its commerce has begun to pick up a bit. The houses in Newport are almost all small and ugly. They are of wood, unpainted. In every respect this town has all the marks of decadence. The harbor is the only thing which shows any sign of wealth." It is not often that the Frenchmen, ever prone to make predictions concerning America and things American, guessed so correctly as did La Rochefoucauld when he said: "Newport seems destined from its advantages to be a navy-yard of the United States, when she has a navy."

Chastellux, speaking of the days when the French army arrived at Newport, and that city was enjoying a prosperity unfortunately soon to be blighted, says of its rival: "The city of Providence is built on the bank of a river hardly six miles in length. It has only one street but this is very long. The Fauxbourg, which is pretty considerable, is on the other side of the river. This city is pretty. The houses are not large but well built and very comfortable inside." When

Ségur visited it at the close of the war, he found that "Providence, which ought at present to be a great and populous city, could then already pass for a pretty little town. It contained only three thousand inhabitants, but all I think enjoyed comfortable circumstances resulting from constant work and active industry." Prince de Broglie gives a pretty picture of life in Providence, while the French army was in quarters there after Yorktown. "General Rochambeau," says he, "to distract his army, and please the ladies," gave several balls in "the fine large public hall destined for that purpose." At the first one of these entertainments de Broglie remarked the Misses Bown, sisters of the "Governor of the town," whom he does not describe because he "did not wish to turn all the men's heads, and make all the women jealous," after which sagacious phrase he proceeds nevertheless to paint flattering portraits of them both. But by the time Brissot had reached America the change had come; "The silence which reigns on Sunday in all American cities reigned also on Monday in Providence. Everything proclaimed the decline of business." After this depression things looked up and we are glad to read in La Rochefoucauld of the great improvement which a little later had begun in this leading city of Rhode Island: "The surroundings of Providence are more agreeable

than those of Newport and give a great idea of the place. The town occupies both banks of the river. It has two parts connected by a well-built bridge. Its large, well-built, well-painted houses are very numerous. The streets are paved. This town is constantly growing and the hopes of a more considerable growth are so great that streets and ground plans of houses yet to be built are already laid out well up the hillside. Commerce, as I have said, is much more considerable in Providence than Newport—four or five times more." He regrets that Providence as well as Newport engages in the odious slave-trade.

Hartford failed, for some reason or another, to make a favorable impression upon the Frenchmen who visited it. Brissot was the one who had the best things to say, although his opening sentence arouses one's suspicion as to the value of his testimony: "I passed through Hartford twice, both times at night, so that I cannot give an exact description of it. The town appeared to me a considerable one. It is a rural city for most of the inhabitants are farmers. Everybody there is well-to-do. It is regarded as one of the most agreeable in Connecticut for its society." He becomes more enthusiastic as soon as he gets outside the city limits: "The country round about Hartford is very well cultivated, and there are elegant houses, large fields covered with herds of

cattle, which are enormously fat and supply the markets of New York and even Philadelphia etc., etc. In describing the outskirts of Hartford we are at the same time picturing all of Connecticut, and especially the surroundings of Middletown and of New Haven." From the summary way in which Chastellux disposes of this capital of Connecticut one would think that the pet of American society must have received some severe rebuff there: "The city of Hartford is not worth stopping for, either when you are travelling through it or when you speak of it. It consists of one long and very handsome street, parallel to the river. It is rather wide and the houses are not far apart. Besides, it has many annexes. Everything is Hartford for six leagues round, but East Hartford and West Hartford are separate towns, and are composed of houses scattered through the country."

New Haven honored itself by electing to citizenship on September 23, 1784, certain of the French visitors, and among others, the Marquis of Condorcet, which explains his pseudonym, "A citizen of New Heaven" [*sic*], affixed to his four letters which appear at the end of Mazzei's book upon America. It is no wonder the distinguished marquis fully appreciated this civic compliment, coming as it did from the first city to be organized in New England, and whose first mayor,

Roger Sherman, had served with Jefferson on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence. "There was probably no place in the country from 1786 to 1788 [says Governor Baldwin in his erudite brochure on these letters of Condorcet] of the size of New Haven, which could have furnished so many men capable of writing effectively on topics of constitutional government, and of treating them from so many points of view." Brissot was also elected to honorary citizenship, and, therefore, it is no surprise to find that this generally serious gentleman fairly blossoms out when he treats of New Haven and assumes a style more befitting Chastellux than the future leader of the Girondins: "New Haven yields not at all to Weatherfields in the beauty of its fair sex. At the balls which take place there during the winter it is not unusual, despite Puritan austerity, to witness a hundred charming girls attired in those brilliant colors seen so seldom as you go toward the middle states, and that, too, dressed with simple elegance." Notwithstanding Brissot's flight of enthusiasm, we learn from La Rochefoucauld that "the fortunes of the inhabitants are modest. Most of them have farms in the neighborhood from which they draw their provisions; these small estates, each capable of supplying the needs of a family, deprive market-gardeners of a chance of selling vegetables

in New Haven, so they are sent to New York. Two rich merchants last year erected at a large cost a cotton factory two miles from the town." He goes on to describe the place as follows: "The city of New Haven occupies a large area, for the houses are generally set well apart. Cultivated fields are to be seen in the middle of the town. All the streets are straight and cut each other at right angles. The houses, mostly of wood, are small and pretty. The streets are planted with trees. Two large edifices in brick belonging to the college, a fine church, and a State House adorn the principal square, in the midst of which, however, there also appears the gloomy spectacle of a cemetery. The general appearance of the town is agreeable. It seems to be so located that it ought to be healthy, and they say that the mortality is lower than in any other city of the United States." Mandrillon gives as a reason for its commercial importance that "the port and city of New Haven are the general rendez-vous of the colony, and it is there that all their business is transacted. The city is situated on the indentation of a bay leading off the stretch of water separating Long Island from the mainland. It was formerly the capital of a colony of the same name, but was re-united to Connecticut in 1664 by a charter of Charles II. The instruction of youth is carefully looked after there. To this

effect they have founded a college which is very well attended. It is called Yare [!] Hall."

It is well to begin our account of Albany by reciting the favorable impression it made upon Chastellux when he first approached it, because most of the other French comments are not so kindly, due possibly to French inability to appreciate the phlegmatic Dutch temperament: "The valley through which this river [Hudson] runs, and Albany, built in an amphitheatre on its western bank, would have presented a most agreeable prospect if snow had not somewhat disfigured it. A handsome house, built half-way up opposite the ferry, attracted one's attention, and seemed to invite strangers to stop at General Schuyler's, who was both its owner and architect." But alas! this favorable first impression was rudely readjusted by his annoyance at the celebration of New Year's Eve in that otherwise usually staid and respectable city. Nevertheless, he did not fail to bear witness to the dignity and poise which apparently attended their form of inebriety, for he reports that next morning he met a number of drunken folk about the streets who astonished him by walking without slipping on the icy sidewalks, whilst he, cold sober, had the greatest difficulty in staying on his legs. La Rochefoucauld devotes much more attention to this city than any of his compatriots, as indeed but few of them

visited it: "There are in Albany six thousand inhabitants, of which two thousand are slaves; the laws of New York authorize slavery. All the old houses are built in the Dutch fashion. The front wall rises by a series of steps in a pyramid, terminated either by a picturesque chimney or by some iron figures, etc. All the houses built in the last ten years are brick, tall and large, in the English style. The Council is composed at present of young men who allege that they are busy embellishing the town and making it comfortable, but in this city there is an apathy, an ignorance, and antiquity of ideas which does not permit the belief that these efforts will be worth considering for a long time. Young men there, I believe, are born old! There are five churches in Albany, one the Dutch Lutheran, a building of very Gothic and rather curious construction, and one each of the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, German Calvinists, and Methodists. Hospitality to strangers does not seem to be the dominating quality of the citizens of Albany. The few that we have seen are dull, heavy, live at home with a wife sometimes pretty, often awkward, to whom they do not say thirty words a day although they call her 'my dear.' There are doubtless exceptions both in the charms of the ladies and in the easy and confiding manner of their husbands with them, but they are said to be rare. The ancient

forms, the old, circumspect and timidly avaricious customs of the early Dutch are religiously preserved in Albany." He says they are so apathetic that Connecticut is getting the new West Indies trade away from them, and two important cities built in their immediate neighborhood at New City and Troy, also, by superior enterprise, are cutting into their commerce. "Albany is one of the most ancient establishments of North America. Forty-five ships belonging to its inhabitants and forty-five others to New York or other places along the river supply the commerce of Albany, which is steady but does not seem lucrative."

Most of the French travellers passed through Baltimore at one time or another, and all agreed in speaking of its rapid growth and active, bustling appearance. Beaujour says that it is one of those American cities whose walls were raised as if by enchantment through foreign trade, and includes it in his list of three (with Boston and Philadelphia) whose people do not die content unless they have changed their profession three or four times during their lives. Several years before his visit there came to it, in 1781, Abbé Robin, who observes "Baltimore thirty years ago was only a little village, but to-day it is a large and wealthy city. Its form is that of a crescent. The northern part seems to rise from the bosom of the waters and to forecast its future greatness.

Lord Baltimore, an Irish Catholic, established two hundred Catholics in Maryland and gave his name to this city." "It is of considerable size," remarked du Bourg, "and well-built—it even has sidewalks!" From Brissot, who went there in 1788, we learn: "Baltimore has about two thousand houses and fourteen thousand inhabitants. It is very irregularly built and on land slightly raised above the Patabsco. There is stagnant water in the city, few of the streets are paved, and are frightfully muddy after a rain. All this would seem to prove the air unhealthy, nevertheless, ask the inhabitants and they will tell you that it is not. Baltimore was only a village before the war." In 1791 Chateaubriand found Baltimore "a pretty city, very clean and very bustling," although his stay there was but a brief one, only long enough to pay the captain of his ship for bringing him from Europe, and to give him "a farewell dinner in an excellent tavern near the harbor." He then straightway engaged a seat in the stage which ran tri-weekly to Philadelphia, and which started for that city at the convenient hour of four the next morning! St. Méry, who landed at Norfolk, Virginia, and passed through Baltimore in May, 1794, on his way to Philadelphia, makes sundry significant comments: "Baltimore is growing rapidly and is elegantly constructed with brick houses mostly

two stories high, fine sidewalks in front of them, some of which are ten feet wide (but entrances to cellars take up half); straight, well-paved streets; street lamps here, as is generally customary in America; population ten thousand, of which ten per cent are negroes; twelve churches of ten sects and one theatre. The hotels lend you slippers so that your boots or shoes will be found clean outside the door in the morning."

Of all the cities in our country, none have changed so much as New York since it was visited by the Frenchmen after the English had evacuated it. As it had been in the hands of the latter during the war, the French who came over to fight did not have a fair opportunity to compare it with our other cities, but those who came a few years later found it quite different from its sisters. Milfort found New Yorkers "very affable and hospitable. They receive strangers kindly." Pontgibaud says: "My surprise equalled my curiosity when I entered New York. I admired—from within, this time—this handsome city which had then but twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the beautiful neighboring island called Long Island. I was delighted with all I saw—the elegance and cleanliness of the houses added to the beauties of virgin nature." Chateaubriand describes New York as "a gay, populous, and commercial city"—this was in 1791. The

captious Beaujour actually unbends enough to praise it: "New York has a more smiling appearance than Philadelphia, and more closely resembles an European city. It is built at the mouth of the Hudson on a tongue of land which stretches between the river and Long Island Sound and which has been detached by a cutting from the mainland. The esplanade called 'The Battery,' located at the sharp angle formed by the meeting of the Hudson and the sea, affords one of the most beautiful views in the world." Its delightful situation particularly impressed Bonnet, who concluded that "a sojourn in New York is good for the health."

Brissot gives us an account of how the city's business reverses, sustained during and after the Revolutionary War, were being recouped: "Men who doubt the prodigious effect of liberty upon man and his industry should go to America,—of what miracles will they be witnesses! While almost everywhere in Europe towns and cities are falling into ruins, here new buildings are going up on all sides. New York has been partly consumed by fire since the last war, but the traces of this terrible conflagration are fast disappearing. The activity which reigns everywhere proclaims that prosperity has already begun. Everywhere they are broadening and extending the streets." He describes new buildings that are going up, and

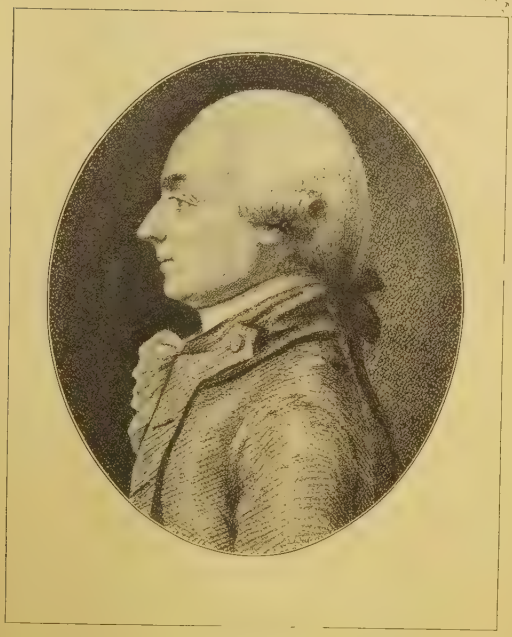
how they reclaimed a two-hundred-foot strip of land along the North River. "I see nothing but workmen marking out lots, building, paving, constructing public works. They are erecting a building for Congress and repairing a hospital. The high cost of living is generally on the increase in New York since the war." He gives legal fees, doctors' fees, the cost of board and lodging, and adds that there are no cafés in New York. Much as he prefers Philadelphia, he cannot help noticing that building in that city is going on less slowly than in New York.

Mandrillon does not agree that New York was a bustling place—he even called us lazy! "New York, an important town, known to-day (as is the entire colony) under the name of New York, has lost much of its importance and prosperity since the last Revolution. Although the streets are irregular, the city does not for that reason present a less interesting appearance, because of the general cleanliness which reigns there. The houses, built of brick and roofed with tiles, are more comfortable than elegant. Everyone is well-to-do, food is abundant, of excellent quality and cheap. The poorest class of people have an assured support from the oyster-fisheries, which employ two hundred boats. It is perhaps to this general ease of circumstances that is due the indifference and laziness for which its inhabitants

are reproached, and which has had so marked an influence upon the customs and society of that city." To accuse New Yorkers of laziness is surely bad enough, but Bourgeois goes further by alleging that "they take part in contraband trade with marvellous skill"—shades of the custom house, that such a thing should have been!

When speaking of Philadelphia we mentioned the absence there of public promenades criticised by several writers. Perrin du Lac found two such promenades in New York, but, says he, "they are little used. Promenading does not seem to be regarded as a relaxation by these hardworking people. . . . As for the women, they prefer the principal street, with its roomy sidewalks shaded by fine trees, where they can enjoy the pleasure of looking at the elegant shops which line it on both sides, from one end to the other of its entire length." He is struck by the fact that the New York "streets are wide and have sidewalks. The streets are clean, and regularly lighted by night."

Crèvecœur, by reason of his long residence in New York as French Consul, is perhaps the best qualified of all to describe what he saw going on about him: "The city of New York is handsome although irregular. This irregularity proceeds from the nature of the soil, from the steepness of the peninsula on which the earlier houses are



Saint John de Crèvecœur, 1786.

built, as well as from the necessity of continually making artificial ground to increase the extent of the city and procure for its trade the needful warehouses and quays. The inhabitants derive this taste for building along the water from the early Dutch settlers, and the admirable skill with which they accomplish it from their own wisdom. There is not, I believe, another city on this continent where the art of laying the foundations of quays and of constructing them has been pushed further. I have seen one built forty feet into the water. This was done with trunks of pine trees fastened together, which they drive in with rocks, and then cover the surface with earth. Beaver Street, which to-day is quite a ways from the water, was named thus because formerly it was a small bay in which these animals had erected a dam. I have conversed with old inhabitants who told me that they had seen the sea mount up to the very neighborhood of the City Hall. Certain streets have sidewalks on both sides paved with slabs of rock and adorned with plane-trees, whose shade in summer is equally pleasant for the passersby and for the houses. Here may be seen a union of Dutch neatness with English taste and architecture. The houses are located, finished, and painted with the greatest care. Here the merchants are intelligent, able, and rich, and the artisans very skilful, es-

pecially the carpenters, cabinet-makers, and joiners. Stone being rare, nearly the whole city is built of brick. Let those who, like myself, have experienced the remarkable hospitality of New Yorkers, praise it as it deserves. New York being the favorite port for English packet-boats, this city is necessarily the first that European strangers enter. The reception which they receive here suffices to give them a high idea of American generosity, as well as of the simple and cordial friendliness which they may expect in the other cities of this continent. The streets are frequently cleaned and are lighted on dark nights. The city contains thirty thousand inhabitants and twenty churches belonging to different sects. It is also a pleasure to see a college, beautifully built; it is furnished with an excellent library and a great number of costly mathematical instruments."

The most recent and striking improvement in New York has been the widening of our great Fifth Avenue, effected by removing the encroachments of front door-steps, etc. Of how ancient a growth were these encroachments appears from the fact that certain of their predecessors were noted by St. Méry over a century ago: "In New York two benches parallel to each other, stretch out before each front door," and he also notes that cellar doors were allowed to take up part of the sidewalks. In

respect to those as well as to certain other municipal annoyances, we have been a long-suffering people, but "all's well that ends well"!

St. Méry tells us that "Brooklyn has about a hundred houses," so it would be rather in an article on country life than in this chapter that one should depict those early beginnings of the Brooklyn that to-day boasts nearly two million inhabitants. Another great change in the neighborhood of New York is revealed by Bourgeois's account of New Rochelle, in those early days "inhabited only by Frenchmen, who speak the purest French in the United States, and indeed but little else; children are sent there to learn it, and everybody there speaks it, even the negroes."

New Orleans came under our flag so soon after the conclusion of the quarter century we have been studying that reference to that charming city is hardly out of place here, although Perrin du Lac thought it "does not merit favorable mention." Baudry des Lozières (whose scope of studies in the colonial field knew no bound, ranging from botany and medicine to recording savage dialects, or eulogizing colonial officials) was greatly taken with the city of New Orleans. "It lies," says he, "in the midst of delicious gardens," and "since the Spaniards have rebuilt the city in brick, it has much in common with Philadelphia." Bourgeois reports that "many of the houses are

built of brick, two stories high, placed in a line, and presenting a pleasing prospect. Others are only of wood, adorned with a balcony, which makes them agreeable to look upon. The streets are wide and straight as a string." He also noticed the number of fine gardens and "the superb promenade which runs along the top of the levee." General Collot admired New Orleans, and said of St. Louis ("which from a military standpoint has one of the best situations on the Mississippi River") that "it will be to New Orleans what Albany is to New York city." It was Berquin-Duvallon who wrote at the greatest length of New Orleans. He attributes to Mississippi River water such marvellous powers of fecundity as to make one wonder that the states adjoining that stream are not vastly over-populated. He would have us believe that its effect upon the gentler sex of New Orleans was such that it was not unusual to see there a mother, her daughter, and her grand-daughter all about to have children at the same time!

And now to conclude our long excursion from city to city by one to Washington, the beautiful capital of our country, honored with the most precious name that our history can boast. Although Blanchard, after visiting Mount Vernon, stopped at Georgetown, and must have passed over the site where Washington now stands, there

The United States Capitol at Washington.

From the collection of Charles A. Munn.

was as yet nothing for him to see but fields and rolling country. Minister Ternant in October, 1791, "was unwilling to quit Georgetown without going to see the site selected for the federal city; the situation seemed to me interesting in every respect." He believed that the federal treasury would be enriched by "thirty million livres tournois" from the sale of building lots there. He reports President Washington to be greatly interested in the city named after him, and that everybody hoped he would live long enough to see Congress transferred thither. The Marquise de la Tour du Pin, in 1794, refers casually to "the new city of Washington, which they are beginning to build." We have to wait until 1810 to hear anything definite, and even then Beaujour fixes the population at only 6,000: "The city of Washington, the present site of the Federal Government, has been laid out on a very handsome and uniform plan. Its situation between Maryland and Virginia, near the Chesapeake, which is the heart of the United States, and on elevated land whither the Potomac brings the largest vessels, has been well chosen. The town has an area of 4,124 acres, of which 712 are reserved for avenues and 3,412 for sites for houses, but with the exception of some buildings destined for the government (the principal one of which, where Congress sits, bears the pompous name of 'Capitol'),

none have yet been built, and it appears that the very grandeur of the plan will either prevent or at least retard its execution, because this country is not yet rich enough to populate so large a site. Washington to-day resembles those Russian cities marked out in the deserts of Tartary, within which one sees nothing but empty fields and isolated houses."

CHAPTER VIII

COUNTRY LIFE

To understand the United States of to-day, a foreigner must study our cities, because they contain forty-seven per cent of our entire population. During revolutionary days they contained only ten per cent, according to Bonnet, Brissot, and Bayard, who at that time estimated the proportion of our country residents as high as nine-tenths of the whole. It was but natural that this distribution of our population should result, as Bonnet noticed, in "this people having six land-owners for every one lacking it, instead of being made up as is the French nation almost entirely of tenants." Radical indeed is this change in our drift-tendencies of population effected by less than a century and a half of national existence! From the foregoing it is obvious that to understand the Americans of those early days we must go out into the country and see how life there affected the customs of our forebears. First and foremost, if Rochambeau is to be believed, it made for patriotism more than did residence in crowded centres; for he was quick to notice that few country

folk were Tories, while "one ought not to be surprised that merchants or other dwellers in the ports" showed less zeal for the Revolution than the farmers. It was, therefore, decidedly appropriate that George Washington, representing as he did not only that nine-tenths majority, but also its highest patriotism, should have been the first President of our republic. And where better than at the home of that distinguished gentleman-farmer, his retreat from the responsibilities of statesmanship, can we begin our investigation of the country life of his time? Let us visit it with our friend Blanchard, commissary in Rochambeau's army on its march north after the glorious victory at Yorktown. Another of our party shall be Custine, an officer who had been appointed lieutenant at the tender age of nine, and whose brilliant career was soon to be ended by the guillotine (August 28, 1793)—an episode in an hysteria of "crimes committed in the name of liberty." Custine kept a diary during his stay in America, but unfortunately it has never been found. But let us turn to Blanchard's narrative.

"General Washington's home and birthplace is situated between Colchester and Alexandria. Mrs. Washington had arrived there the evening before. She invited Monsieur de Custine, who commanded our division, to dine with her, and to bring with him several of his officers; he sug-

gested my going; we arrived there ten strong. Mrs. Washington is about fifty years old, short and stout, and of comely appearance. She was simply dressed, and her manner is unaffected. She had with her three other ladies, relatives. As to her residence, it is the prettiest country house I have yet seen in America. It is symmetrically built, and has two stories, counting the garrets, where pleasant bedrooms are fitted up. Around about are a number of cabins for negroes, of whom the general owns many, for they are needed on his immense estates, estimated to contain ten thousand acres of land—parts of it excellent, as I noticed. A large portion consists of woodlands where Mr. Washington enjoyed shooting before the war, which inclined him to the military life he has since led. In the neighborhood of the house the land is not fertile nor are the trees fine—even the garden is arid. What must have decided the general's parents to chose this dwelling place is the view, which is extremely beautiful. The Potomac flows along the bottom of the garden, and the largest warships can anchor there. It divides into several branches, but just at this point is half a league wide. The entire outlook is most agreeable. The opposite bank ought to be more settled with houses and villages. In short, it is a handsome abode—befitting General Washington. We quitted his worthy spouse

that evening, after spending a very agreeable and truly interesting day."

Passing from one great American to another, from George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, we shall see that although the latter was visited at his country house by several French officers and travellers, he clearly found the Marquis de Chastellux the most congenial of them all. To that sympathetic annalist, therefore, we will turn for his impressions of the life led by that distinguished American in his country retreat. Under the guidance of a loquacious Irishman, Chastellux arrived at the foot of some hills from which point he "had no difficulty in recognizing on one of their summits Mr. Jefferson's house, for 'it shines alone in these retreats.' He himself built it, and chose the site; nature owed it to such a sage and man of taste to offer him as his heritage the spot where he could best study and enjoy her. He calls his house Monticello (little mountain), a modest name, as it stands on a very high one!—but it shows the owner's fondness for the language of Italy, and even more for the fine arts, of which that land was the cradle, and still is the refuge. From this on I no longer needed a guide; I dismissed my Irishman, and after mounting for over half an hour by a fairly easy road, I arrived at Monticello. This residence, of which Mr. Jefferson was the architect

(and at times the builder) is in the Italian style, quite elegant, though not faultless, nevertheless; it consists of a large square pavilion, entered from two porticos adorned with columns. The ground floor consists chiefly of a large drawing-room, very lofty, decorated entirely in antique style; above the drawing-room is a library of the same shape. Two small wings, of only a ground floor and attic, flank this pavilion and communicate with kitchens, pantries, etc., which on each side form a sort of basement, surmounted by a terrace. It is not alone to describe the house that I enter into these details, but because it in nowise resembles the others to be seen in this country; in fact it may be said that Mr. Jefferson is the first American to consult the fine arts in regard to his dwelling-place. But I ought to concern myself with him alone—I should portray a man not yet forty, with a tall figure and kind, agreeable face, but whose wit and information could sufficiently replace all external charms—an American, who though never yet out of his own country, is musician, draftsman, geometrician, astronomer, physicist, jurisconsult, statesman—an American senator who sat two years in the famous Congress, author of the Revolution (which is never mentioned without respect, unhappily mingled with too many regrets!)—a governor of Virginia, filling that trying post during the invasions of Arnold,

of Philips, and of Cornwallis—lastly, a philosopher, withdrawn from the world and affairs, because he loves the world only so far as he believes that he can be useful to it, and because his fellow citizens are not yet in a state to bear the light or to suffer criticism. A gentle, amiable wife, pretty children he is bringing up carefully, a house to beautify, great possessions to improve, sciences and arts to cultivate—all these are what remain to Mr. Jefferson, after having played a distinguished part on the stage of the New World, and what he prefers to the honorable appointment of minister plenipotentiary in Europe. The visit I paid him was not unexpected; he had asked me some time before to spend a few days in the bosom of his family, that is, in the heart of the mountains. Nevertheless I found his greeting grave and even cold; but after spending two hours with him, I felt I had known him all my life. Walks, the library, and, above all, conversation—always varied, always interesting, always maintained by that sweet content two persons feel who, on exchanging sentiments and opinions, find themselves in constant accord, and understand one another's half-expressed word—all these made four days pass for me like four minutes. This conformity was so perfect that not only were our tastes alike, but even our preferences—those preferences which dry-as-dust and material

minds ridicule as enthusiasm, and which men of sensibility glorify under the same name. I recall with pleasure that one evening as we were chatting over a bowl of punch after Mrs. Jefferson had withdrawn, we happened to speak of the poems of Ossian. It was as if an electric spark had flashed from one to the other!—each recalled to the other certain passages of those sublime poems which had struck him most, and we conversed upon them to my travelling companions, who happily knew English well and could appreciate them, but who had never read them. Soon it was decided that the book should have its place as a toast—it was fetched, placed beside the punch-bowl, and together they lasted us far into the night ere we realized it! At times physics, at others politics or art formed the subject of our conversations, for nothing has escaped Mr. Jefferson, and it seems as if, from his youth up, he had set his mind, like his house, on heights from which he could contemplate the entire universe."

A pleasant glimpse at the country house of another historic American family is given by the Marquise de la Tour du Pin: "The Van Buren farm house, an old Dutch mansion, occupied a delightful site on the river bank. Though entirely isolated on the land side, it had easy communication with the other shore of the stream. Opposite, on the Canada road, rose a large tavern,

where one could get all kinds of information, newspapers, and notices of sale. Two or three stage-coaches passed it every day. Van Buren owned two canoes, and the river was always so calm we could cross it at any time. No road traversed this estate, shut in at some hundreds of toises (toise=about two yards) by a mountain, covered with noble forests, and also belonging to Van Buren. We sometimes thought this farm would suit us, but it was held at a higher figure than we could give. That alone prevented us from acquiring it, for the general rule in America at that time was (and I think still is), no matter how much a man was attached to his house, his farm, his horse, or his negro—if you offered him a third more than the value, you were sure, in a land where everything has a price, to become the owner!"

One would naturally expect complimentary comments upon life in the country houses of great men such as those just described. But what of that enjoyed by the rank and file of our people —how did that strike the French? A soldier who spent only twenty-four days ashore in America, and who slept on the ground every night, never once during that entire period being able to change his clothes, could not be considered a severe critic if he said unpleasant things of American country life! And yet Comte de

Revel, who had that very experience in the trenches before Yorktown, "saw some very fine houses which from their exteriors as well as their comfortable interiors seemed to belong to wealthy people." Nor was this his only amiable remark concerning those he had crossed the sea to aid. His friendly impressions of what little of American life he was able to see are rendered all the more valuable because they come from the only Frenchman so critical as to find fault with the discipline of French troops in service here; on that subject he is as severe as he was kindly to us.

Turning from Revel and his brief stay to others who had ampler time to enter into the life away from cities as led by our ancestors, let us accompany some of his compatriots on a round of visits to certain country houses, beginning with that of General Nelson, where we shall see what took place when adverse weather conditions kept them indoors. The general himself chanced to be away, but Chastellux says that his mother and his wife "received me with all the interest, simplicity, and cordiality customary in that family; but since in America they never feel that women alone can do the honors of a house, five or six Nelsons were assembled to receive me, among others, Secretary Nelson, uncle of the general, two of his brothers, and two sons of the secretary. All these young people were married, some had their wives and

children with them—all named Nelson, but addressed by their baptismal names alone, so that during my two days in this truly patriarchal house it was impossible for me to learn who was who! When I say that I passed two days in this house it must be understood in the most literal sense, for the weather was so bad that we could not go out. As the accommodations were neither commodious nor spacious, the parlor, or salon, was occupied by all the company, especially the men, from breakfast until bedtime, but the conversation was agreeable and well sustained. If you wished diversion you found at your hand very good English and French books. An excellent breakfast at nine in the morning, a heavy dinner at two o'clock, tea and punch in the afternoon, and a light supper which looked very nice, made a pleasant division of the day for those whose stomachs could stand it. It perhaps merits observation that on this occasion where fifteen or twenty people, of whom all were strangers to the family and the land, found themselves thrown together in the country and forced by bad weather to remain indoors, there was no question of playing cards. How many parties of tric-trac, of whisk [*sic*], of lotto, would there have been among us as a necessary consequence of an obstinate rain! Perhaps there would also have been more agreeable amusements to vary the

scene—music, drawing, reading aloud, and woman's fancy-work are resources unknown in America, but it must be hoped that they will not delay in acquiring them; certainly training was all that a Miss Tolliver needed, for she sang several songs with English words but Italian music."

Brissot shall tell us of a visit he made upon Senator Dalton of New Hampshire while on his travels in the northeastern part of the country: "We left on Sunday and went to dine at Colonel Dalton's house, which is three miles from New-Berry on the Merrimac. His farm is well stocked; I saw thirty cows there, a large number of fat pigs, sheep, provisions in abundance, and a well-planted garden. Artichokes grow very well, but they only cultivate them out of curiosity, for they are not eaten. He takes great pains with his gardens, which are rather neglected in America. Mr. Dalton received me with that frankness which becomes a man in easy circumstances, and a man of talent—with that hospitality peculiar to the inhabitants of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, which is certainly much greater there than in any of the Eastern or Middle States. The Americans do not know what we call large banquets and fêtes. They treat strangers as they treat themselves every day, and they live well. They said to me that they could not understand

starving all the week in order to feast on Sunday! This fact reveals a well-to-do people which does not concern itself overmuch with fasting. Mr. Dalton's family was a picture of patriarchal life, and of true domestic happiness. It was composed of four or five pretty, modest young persons dressed in simple silk gowns, for it was Sunday, and they had just come from meeting or church. Mr. Dalton had been speaker, or president of the legislative body of New Hampshire. He had the reputation of speaking well, and of conducting proceedings with dignity. He is now one of the senators in the national Congress."

As a change from the sedateness of the entertainment afforded by this serious household, and to get as many points of view as possible, let us turn to what Chastellux found near Portsmouth, New Hampshire: "Mr. Tracey returned with two well-appointed carriages and took me, as well as my staff-officers, to his country house. This house is situated one mile from the town on a very pretty site, but I could not judge of it because it was already night. Nevertheless, I went out to see the garden by moonlight; it is large and composed of different terraces. The house is very pretty and perfectly furnished. Everything displays that magnificence combined with simplicity which one finds only in merchants' houses. The evening

passed rapidly with the assistance of several glasses of punch and agreeable conversation. The ladies whom I found already assembled, were Mrs. Tracey, her two sisters, and Miss Lee, their cousin. Mrs. Tracey has an agreeable and animated face, and her manners correspond. At ten o'clock they served an excellent supper with very good wine. Miss Lee sang, and persuaded Monsieur de Vaudreuil and Monsieur de Talleyrand to sing also. About midnight the ladies withdrew, but we continued to drink Madeira and Sherry. Mr. Tracey, following the custom of the country, offered us pipes, a proposition which was accepted by Monsieur de Talleyrand and Monsieur Montesquieu, with the result that they succeeded in getting themselves drunk and carried home, where they were very glad to find themselves in bed. As for me, I remained perfectly calm and continued to discuss commerce and politics with Mr. Tracey."

Few of the Frenchmen travelled so widely in our country as Chastellux, which gave him peculiar advantages in knowing people of all sections, and the life they led in their homes. Let us stray with him as far as the Byrd estate on the James River in Virginia, a property that is still in the possession of that family: "I went on twenty-six miles in very hot weather and by a most agreeable road, every moment coming upon

fine residences, for the banks of the River James is the garden spot of Virginia. That of Mrs. Byrd (Westover), to which I was going, surpasses them all for magnificence of buildings, beauty of situation, and the charm of the society which one finds there. Mrs. Byrd is the widow of a colonel who served in the last war, and who was later a member of the Royal Council. She has taken charge of this fine house on the banks of the James, a valuable property, a considerable number of slaves, and some farms, which she has improved. She is forty-two, of a pleasing figure, and very spirited. By diligent effort and activity she has to some extent repaired the effects of the dissipation of her husband, and her house is the most famous and agreeable of the neighborhood." Even more intimate than all of these accounts is one which the Duc de Rochefoucauld gives of his stay at General Knox's country place. In it he voices the instinctive feeling of all the French writers on America that it was amid the leisure and seclusion of the country, rather than in the bustle of the city that a clear insight was to be had into the real character of the American and his home. Says he: "Mrs. Knox gains greatly on acquaintance. If you have seen her only in Philadelphia you would think her never happy except at a table of commerce or of whisk [*sic*], but in her own country house she proves

bright, well educated, admirable in every respect, and full of merit. One recognizes a truly master mind. In the country Miss Knox loses her excessive timidity. She lets one see that she is sprightly, clever, and gay."

That the custom of "stirrup-cup" was preserved among us appears from Chastellux's experience: "At Mrs. Erskine's at Ringwood, N. J., they gave me all the information I needed, and after having drunk a glass of madeira, according to the custom of the country which does not permit one to leave a house without having a drink, I remounted my horse." The writer can testify that the ancient hospitality of Ringwood has been worthily maintained. The Marquise de la Tour du Pin found when leaving the Lansing home, near Albany, that, "Madame Lansing having prepared for us a glass of madeira and a biscuit, it was absolutely necessary to partake, at the risk of being considered bad neighbors." Mr. Lansing was of Dutch parentage, and was greatly surprised to learn that his French neighbor, tilling a modest farm near by, had once been the diplomatic representative of the French king in Holland! General Schuyler and "Mr. Renslaer" of Albany had advised those distinguished settlers that it was best "to divide our funds into three equal parts, one devoted to purchasing land, another to equipment, including slaves, horses,

cows, agricultural implements, and furniture, and the third to provide against the unexpected (such as loss of slaves or cattle) and for living expenses."

That pleasant word "picnic," so popular at all times in our country, played havoc with the spelling powers of the French. Their ways of rendering it were various, of which let "pique-nique" be a sample. Their appreciation, however, of that rustic entertainment was as enthusiastic as their spelling of it was uncertain. Nor was this the only word to be mangled, for Baron Closen writes "Janckey Dudle" as the nickname given us by the English! Milfort effectively disguises two of our Indian tribes, the Cherokees and the Choctaws, by calling them the Scherokys and the Tchactas, and spells Norwich (Connecticut) both Norège and Noraige; and Volney delights to tell of "Kentokey."

Bayard shall give us an account of one picnic which he attended: "Laborers are sent the day before to cut down branches and make a small enclosure near a private house whose kitchen is lent for such cooking as is necessary, but always it must be near a river. The host brings cold meats, pastries, etc., and the china and silver are set out on tables covered with fine linen. As soon as a guest arrives, he is given cold punch in a large china loving-cup, often containing three or four bowlsful, which passes round the circle, and is

carried to every one's lips. Few French became accustomed to this ancient way of drinking, and in America, where almost all the men chew tobacco, it is excessively untidy. In the cities everybody has his own glass for beer or wine, but toddy and punch are drunk from a loving-cup. Toddy is a drink made of brandy, sugar, and tepid water, in which are placed one or two roasted crab-apples and a little muscat. When the whole company is assembled, the servants put off in the boats, and nets are thrown into the water; the banks of the river resound with applause if the fishermen make a good catch. The fish are shown to the spectators who order them either to be cooked or thrown back into the water. The ladies intercede for the pretty ones, but the gourmands of America, much less gallant than those of Europe, won't let a pleasing morsel escape for all the beautiful eyes in the world."

Another form of rustic gayety, but this of a much more practical sort, was the gathering of neighbors, known as a "corn husking." "This," says the Marquise de la Tour du Pin, "is called a frolick." How appropriate was the name shall appear from the kind of refreshment offered those undertaking this neighborly task of rapidly performing for each farmer something which unaided he could not do in the two days which, the authoress says, "is as long as the corn could safely lie

unhusked. First they sweep the barn floor as carefully as if they were going to give a ball. When night comes on they light the candles, and all the assembled guests set to work. There is always one of them singing a song or telling a story. About midnight, there is served boiling milk with cider in it. To this is added five or six pounds of sugar if one feels inclined to do the magnificent, or if not, the same quantity of molasses, then some spice, cloves, cinnamon, or nutmeg, etc. Our industrious guests consumed, to our great delight, an immense caldron of this mixture, along with much toasted bread, and left us at five o'clock of a frosty morning, saying (this in English) 'famous good people, those from the old country'!"

Only one disagreeable note is struck in the many pleasing accounts of our country life, and that is caused by the nearer view of slavery which it afforded, an institution to which the French, one and all, objected heartily. Many were the methods they suggested for removing that stain from our escutcheon, the most novel and diverting being one from Bonnet. He urged that the making of maple-sugar would, if properly pushed, abolish slavery, because it would so reduce the price of sugar as to ruin the West Indian cane planters, whom he chiefly blames for the importation of slaves. If they could no longer profitably make cane sugar, the reason for the slave-trade would

cease. Fortunately, that stain is no longer on our nation, and we may pass over the many allusions to it in the French memoirs. Its effect on the habits and manners of the slave owners was so often commented upon that perhaps, to complete our picture of country life at that time, we should include one which Mazzei quotes approvingly from Abbé Raynal, although believing as we do that the abolition of slavery has remedied the results attributed to it: "Men who prefer the tranquillity of country life to a tumultuous sojourn in cities, should be naturally economical and laborious, but they never were that in Virginia. The people there always took great pains in furnishing their houses. They liked frequently to entertain their neighbors, and that too with much display. They were always glad to flaunt the greatest possible luxury before the eyes of English travellers whom business brought to their plantations, but always they slipped back into that laziness and carelessness which is customary in regions where slavery is established."

To slavery, however, we are indebted for one of the most touching episodes in all these French memoirs—one from the pen of the Marquise de la Tour du Pin, describing the purchase by the marquis of a negro woman, long separated from her husband by the cruel laws of slavery, and her delight at finding that he also owned her husband, so that

they could once more be united. Nor did our delightful French pair content themselves with this, but when they left for France the next year they freed these two negroes as well as two others they had bought. So charming is the scene where the four slaves, hardly able to believe that they were being given their freedom, cast themselves at the feet of their benefactress, that we can well believe her words: "Who can describe the deep emotions of such a moment. Never in my life have I experienced anything so sweet!" Nor did it prove easy to carry this act into effect, at least in the case of one of them, for the magistrate before whom the act of manumission took place objected that, being over fifty, the slave could not be freed. Fortunately, the negro could display his birth certificate, proving that he was only forty-nine.

Two customary features of our rural landscape seemed particularly to strike the French, one, the use of wooden fences instead of the green hedges so universal in Europe, and the other, the open and agreeable disposal of the houses in our villages, in contrast to the huddling together of hovels to which their eyes were accustomed at home. They freely expressed their opinion that we would soon take to hedges and give up the less picturesque fences! As one of the reasons therefor Brissot alleges that "it is impossible that

these fences should be cheaper than hedges when away from cities and more in the woods. It is calculated that a negro can hew one hundred and thirty to one hundred and fifty rails of wood in a day." Bonnet thought it just as well that we continue for a while to use open rail fences instead of hedges, because the latter in a recently cleared country would necessarily harbor snakes.

As to the arrangement of our country towns, Beaujour says: "The towns and villages are built as in England along a single street, with but two rows of houses. These houses generally stand apart, so that an accidental fire cannot be communicated from one to the other. They ordinarily form one long street, backed on both sides with gardens and fields. This manner of building villages is preferable to that commonly employed in Europe, where the houses, huddled together, provide all the inconveniences of cities without any of the agreeable features of country life." Even those who dwelt in the cities, says Beaujour, wished them to resemble what was to be enjoyed outside: "American cities are not beautiful and sumptuous like those of Europe, but they have more space, and almost all have trees and gardens throughout, which lends them the appearance and the pleasures of the country. Sometimes the houses do not adjoin, but form groups as in some of our hamlets."

When Lafayette marched his command of two thousand Continental troops along the shores of Long Island Sound, they passed "through a smiling country covered with villages, where the equality of the people indicated a perfect democracy." The French seemed impressed with the fact that country life had quite a different effect in America from that in Europe. The isolation of the farms and country places appeared, in this new land, rather to have benefited the manners and morals than to have had the opposite effect, so usual in the Old World. Robin says: "These farmers, simpler than our peasants, have neither the rusticity nor the boorishness of the latter; better educated, they have neither their wiliness nor their dissimulation. Further removed from the arts and less industrious, they are less hampered by ancient custom, and more ingenious in perfecting and inventing that which increases their comfort." Brissot goes so far as to say: "The Americans have pure customs because nine-tenths of them live some distance apart in the country." Bonnet decided that American farmers were rich in proportion to the number of children they had—the more children a farmer had, the more he could support.

It was in order to study our people thoroughly that Bayard made his journey of one hundred and twenty miles on horseback from Baltimore to Bath,

Virginia, a summer resort now well known as the Warm Springs: "As I wished really to know the American people before going back to my country, I concluded (because they were so scattered) that beneath rustic roofs, in the isolation of forests, on mountain heights I could best lay hold of their characteristic traits, and not in cities where all is imitation, where the inhabitants, in constant communication with Europe, are continually imbued with English prejudices and reveal in their habits as in their opinions the marks of chains they had the courage to break."

His is one of the few pictures now accessible of fashion amusing itself away from home during the hot weather, when life in town was to be avoided by those who could afford a change of air. The custom of frequenting such resorts was then a new one, and life and amusements there were most primitive; it is true they had a theatre, but it was built of logs. That the primitive surroundings in no way abated the fixed habits of polite society appears from Bayard's account of the due observance there of all the elaborate etiquette at that time surrounding tea-drinking!

Another custom, likewise then in its infancy, and also exemplifying the desire of city people for a temporary escape from the restraints of urban life, was that of having out-of-town villas within easy access of their city residences.

"Most New Yorkers," says Bourgeois, "have very pretty houses in the country, some of them as far off as thirty miles. They drive out to them in smart, lightly built chaises, drawn by a single horse, and one can enjoy the pleasure of shooting from them without alighting, for the land is not hilly."

CHAPTER IX

TRAVEL—ITS CONVENIENCES AND INCONVENIENCES

It seems incredible that any one so calm-visaged as Benjamin Franklin must be held accountable for the electrical speeding-up both of modern travel and the transmission of news! Here we are, author and reader, trying to translate ourselves back into the days of that remarkable American, and yet it was his trifling with thunderbolts and kites that is going to make it so difficult for us to forget the aeroplanes and ocean greyhounds of to-day, and to adjust our minds to the forms of travelling found by the French in our country during the days when our independence was gained. We know that General Rochambeau encouraged his officers to travel widely in order to keep him well informed. Let us accompany them, not forgetting, however, that the day of modern conveniences was still far distant. What shall we find was the state of affairs then confronting those about to set out on a journey? All sorts of methods and every kind of conveyance were used by our authors. In the beginning

they tell us chiefly of travel on horseback (which they found expensive), and that almost nobody employed the customary European system of hiring post-horses. This helps us to understand why de Kalb says in a letter of June 18, 1777, that "immense sums were necessary to travel three hundred leagues by land with all my baggage, for the hiring of horses and carriages." Per contra, we find several accounts of how cheaply one could travel in stage-coaches, the usual method of getting from place to place. Brissot writes in August, 1788, of the journey from Boston to New York: "The distance which separates these two cities is about two hundred and sixty miles. Several individuals have joined together to set up a public stage-service to transport travellers at regular intervals from one city to the other. Stages are changed several times on the road, and the trip lasts four days in summer but the travellers are obliged to set out at four o'clock in the morning. Each day they do from sixty to sixty-six miles. The charge is three cents a mile, Massachusetts money; baggage also pays three cents a mile exceeding fourteen pounds, which amount is carried gratuitously. We started out from Boston at four o'clock in the morning in a coach which held six, hung on springs." The pleasantest of all the methods of locomotion as well as the cheapest, was, as might be expected,

happened upon by Chastellux, who enjoyed not only the admirable trait of getting the best out of life wherever he went, but also (happily for us) that of recording it divertingly. Near Albany he took a couple of sleighs which belonged to the State, furnished to him by the Quartermaster-General, "an excellent man named Quakerbush. My intention was to pay for them but he would not consent to it, assuring me that it would be enough if I turned them over to the Quartermaster of Rhode Island, who would send them back when opportunity served. There still exists a very comfortable arrangement for military men and those in the public service—each State maintains relays of horses for them to use in travelling, only requiring that the latter shall be turned over to the Quartermaster of the place where one finishes using them. In the northern states there are also sleighs used for that purpose."

Brissot both enlightens and entertains us by his comparison between our vehicles and those of his own country: "Americans have as carriages diligences, coupés, phaetons, sulkies (with one seat), cabriolets with places for two—all excellent vehicles, with light wheels, good springs and costing half as much as ours. Frenchmen who go to America often take their carriages with them, for they think they are going to land in a savage country! Crèvecœur told me that he

saw one of our gentlefolk land 'with one of those heavy postchaises formerly so much in vogue. It excited great surprise among the Americans, who could not believe that such a thing came from a civilized land. The French Consul, for the honor of the country, hastened to hide it away in a livery stable.'"

Concerning the nature of the roads which, at that time, connected the different parts of the country, there is some conflict of testimony, but although Beaujour and one or two others were inclined to be rather severe in their criticisms, the majority of the testimony is commendatory. Mandrillon goes so far as to say that they "are finer than those in most of the countries of Europe." Ségur is more specific: "The road which I was following was wide, very well laid, and carefully kept up; every place where I stopped the people received me with courtesy, and hastened to get horses for both me and my guide." He significantly comments upon the road between Newport and New London, that "it was the first bad road that I had met in the United States." Minister Fauchet was so unkind as to report to his government, March 21, 1794, that on his way from Baltimore "to reach Philadelphia we had to travel by roads which were almost impassable; it was only after much effort and fatigue that we were able to arrive in that city." The impartial

du Bourg found the Virginia roads "really very fine," although he complains of those in Maryland. Our highways must have been fairly good or Baron Closen would hardly have been able to ride nine hundred and eighty miles (carrying a message from Rochambeau in Williamsburg, Virginia, to Congress in Philadelphia, and back) in less than nine days. It is from La Rochefoucauld that we shall obtain an explanation for the comparative excellence of the roads: "The roads are good because the soil is of such a nature as to make them so. With the exception of that at Lancaster on which they are at present working, road-making as an art has had little to do with the Pennsylvania roads." Bonnet, viewing our roads from another angle, believes they are good, not only because the ground is properly prepared, but also because they are relieved from the heavier traffic, which is diverted to the canals and rivers.

Turning from generalities to that most important particularity, the stage-coach driver, Bayard gives us a very lifelike picture: "An American stage-coach driver is a sort of a magistrate who passes on all kinds of questions. He takes part in the general conversation of the travellers, and often conducts it. It is very rarely that one remonstrates with him, even in the humblest way, upon his manner of driving. If debates arise upon the length of the road, upon whether or not

it is comfortable, upon horse-flesh or the lineage thereof, upon the private fortunes of gentlemen whose houses are along the road, he is consulted and listened to with much deference." The same writer remarks, that when Americans travel they do not carry about with them dozens of shirts like the French, but, while it is true that they carry but few, they are of fine linen and always beautifully washed; they do not admire the French custom of filling up a wardrobe with shirts which become full of damp, and whose number is but a proof of extravagance. In this connection it is comforting to learn from Brissot that American washerwomen were expeditious, which must have been of peculiar importance to the traveller with but few shirts. They charged three and a half or four shillings for washing a dozen pieces. He has already told us that baggage exceeding fourteen pounds had to be paid for extra, which perhaps explains the limited quantity to which Americans accustomed themselves.

Turning from travel by land to that by water, we will let Brissot "say a word on the packet-boats of America and the advantages which they offer: although in my opinion it would be more advantageous and even cheaper to select the land journey, still I must praise the cleanliness and order which reigns in these packets. The cabin of the one upon which I travelled contained

fourteen beds in two tiers, one above the other. Each had its own little window. The room was well ventilated so that one did not breathe that disgusting air which contaminates the packets on the channel. They were freshly varnished. The captain, two men, and a negro cook formed the entire crew. The table was good. There is not a town along this coast which has not packets of this sort, plying to New York as well as to New Haven and New London and all are equally clean and offer the same comforts to travellers. You can be sure that there is nothing like it in the Old World." Nor was travelling by coastwise packets limited to short distances, for Michaux (junior) says they ran at frequent intervals be-between Charleston and New York, a trip which generally took ten days, and cost from forty to fifty dollars: "Some of these boats have rooms tastefully arranged and comfortably disposed for passengers who every year go north in large numbers to avoid the sickly season, returning to Charleston in November." It took his father from the 16th till the 27th of July for his journey aboard one of these packets from Charleston to Philadelphia. From St. Méry we learn that the American sailing ships which carried passengers from Europe were considered very satisfactory and, to judge from the detailed menus which he gives us of various repasts on board, they must

have lived very well. He found the American sailors sensible folk, but remarks that they were great believers in luck, and did not like to leave port on Saturday.

It would appear from a number of observations throughout their writings that the French were not pleased with the American system of delivering mails, nor are we surprised when Chastellux describes one of the methods employed to forward letters to their destination: "Several times during the stay of the French army at Williamsburg, my letters addressed to Rochambeau were entrusted to travellers, postal arrangements not being as yet regularly established, and Americans often lacking the money to pay messengers. The travellers who were not going straight to Williamsburg generally deposited these letters in some inn at the cross-roads, leaving word that the first chance should be taken to send them on to their address, but it often happened that they remained for months together on a mantelpiece without anyone having thought of forwarding them, although the opportunity had often arisen. Finally, some honest traveller espied them and took charge of them out of good will, and without anyone asking him to do so."

As compensating for delays of this sort just described, there seems to have been an entire absence of the temporary but annoying ones caused by high-

waymen, then so prevalent in different parts of Europe. Travellers were relieved from those expensive dangers of the road, although it appears from Brissot that they had not all learned of this fact in advance: "I travelled with a Frenchman who, thinking that he had much to fear in a wild country, had provided himself with pistols. The Americans laughed at this precaution and advised him to put them in his trunk. He had the good sense to believe them." Nor was this his only comment on the safety of our highways: "On the road in Connecticut you will often find pretty girls alone either driving a cabriolet or on horseback galloping hard, with a smart hat on their heads, a white apron, and a dress of colored stuff; examples which prove at the same time their precociousness (since, although young, they are left to themselves), the security of the roads, and the general guilelessness prevailing. You will find them risking themselves alone without protectors in public vehicles; I was wrong to say risking themselves—who could offend them? They are there under the protection of public manners and their own innocence." Even the presence of Indians in the settled parts of the country meant no danger to women, but it was difficult to convince foreigners of this fact. Monsieur Novion, while riding in northern New York with the Marquise de la Tour du Pin, was dis-

tressed at the risk she ran by conversing with a tall Indian whose costume consisted of a blue loin-cloth. When he expressed his horror at the danger incurred by residing in such a country, she vouchsafed him the feminine reply that not only was she not afraid of this Indian, an old acquaintance of hers, but also "if I had told him to throw his tomahawk at you, to protect me, he would have done it!" "On our return he confided to my husband that I had strange friends, and that he had decided to go and live in New York City, where civilization seemed further advanced!"

Before the Revolution took place little attention had of necessity been paid to intercommunication between the different colonies, but we gather from Brissot that this at once began to improve when the colonies united to obtain their independence, for then they promptly realized how vital was such intercourse. As the country came to be more and more settled, roads were pushed out in every direction. Washington writes to Lafayette from Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785: "Roads are being prepared and the route will be made easy [to the fertile plains of Ohio], by the waters of the Potomac and the James Rivers, and, à propos of these navigable streams, I will tell you that I have the satisfaction of seeing that the subscriptions, particularly for the Potomac,

surpass our greatest hopes. This plan of navigation if it succeeds, will improve the relations between the States bordering on the Atlantic and all the Western territory, and will produce great commercial and political results. This last point is the spur to all my efforts, for great evils would result from the separation which would inevitably take place if the difficulties of this communication were not removed by the time the navigation of the Mississippi is opened to us."

Among the various Frenchmen who travelled out into this new western and southern country were two expressly commissioned to report thereon to their government, Minister Genêt sending Michaux (the elder), and Minister Adet General Collot. Genêt, desirous of making investigations in Louisiana, wrote home, July 25, 1793: "I hastened to select an agent fit to conduct our negotiations on the ground. I cast my eyes on Citizen Michaux, botanist of the Jardin National, who is about to undertake a journey to the southern sea to enrich his native land with new discoveries. Citizen Michaux is in every respect an estimable man, enjoying great distinction here; he speaks English and also knows both the idiom and customs of the Indian tribes. He is therefore the very man I would select, especially since, as he is accustomed to travelling in the American backwoods, his departure could not arouse any suspi-

cion"; so off Michaux went to "Kentuckey" and the Mississippi. On June 21, 1796, Minister Adet wrote to Paris: "I have instructed General Collot to travel throughout all the country to the west of the Alleghanys, watered by the Ohio and Mississippi; to take detailed notes upon the character and opinion of the inhabitants, as to population, its annual increase, what its commerce amounts to, and what it ought to be. Besides, I have instructed him to reconnoitre all military points on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and to draw plans of places whose location it might be interesting to know." We suspect that neither Genêt nor Adet found the reports of Michaux or Collet so useful for his political purposes as they have proved for our literary one. Certainly in the case of Michaux, politics was ever secondary to botany. Indeed, he was only about Genêt's business from July 15, 1793, until December 13 of the same year, which was but a small portion of the eleven years during which he botanized from the West Indies as far north as Hudson's Bay.

An agreeable as well as instructive description of a day spent in an American stage-coach comes from Brissot. Let us invite, nay, recommend, our reader to seat himself next that interesting Frenchman, for thus, at his ease, will he see eye to eye with the Frenchman, regaling himself betimes

with the sage observations of that shrewd observer: "I left New York August 25, 1788, at six o'clock in the morning. I had engaged a place in the diligence called the New Line of Stages to Philadelphia. It starts every day except Sunday, both from Philadelphia and New York, two stages from each place, one bringing you to your destination during the day and the other taking a day and a half. You change coaches seven or eight times on the way. Before reaching the coach it was necessary to cross the North River in an open boat. There are four ferries on the way from New York to Philadelphia, besides this crossing of the North River. There is no doubt that sooner or later bridges will replace these ferry-boats, which are often dangerous. One lands at Paulus-Hook and finds the stagecoach waiting. They say the crossing is two miles long; it costs six cents in New York money. The stagecoach has four wheels and is an open vehicle whose sides have double curtains of leather and cloth which let down when it rains or when the sun proves annoying, and which can be raised when you wish to enjoy the air and the view of the country. These vehicles are badly hung but, the road over which they run being of sand and gravel, one suffers no discomfort. The horses are good, and fast enough. The coaches have four seats and hold a dozen people. Light

luggage is put under one's feet, and trunks are fastened on behind, but you are not permitted to have too many. This is the only way of travelling, nor is it a bad one. There is no hiring of private postchaises and horses, which is just as well. Such individuals as do not care to take the stage have a cabriolet with one horse. I wish the French who have travelled in these stages would compare them with those of France,—those heavy diligences into which eight or ten people are stuffed, or with those cabriolets around Paris where people, packed together, are deprived of air by the dirty driver who makes a horrid noise;—with those miserable chaises dragged along by two horses, where one is in a slanting position, annoying and annoyed, and where one breathes poisoned air—all these vehicles, although they run over beautiful roads, make only a league an hour. Ah! if the Americans had the same kind of roads, with what speed would they not travel, since, in spite of the poorness of their roads, one completes during the day the ninety-six miles (or thirty-two leagues) which separate New York and Philadelphia. So it is that after only a century and a half, and in spite of a thousand obstacles Americans are already superior to nations which have existed fifteen centuries. There are to be found in these stages men of every profession. They succeed one another with great rapid-

ity; one who is only going fifteen miles gives up his place to a traveller who is going further,—a mother comes into the stage with her daughter to go to dinner ten miles away, whence she will be brought back by another stage; there are, therefore, constantly new acquaintances to be made. The frequency of these vehicles, the ease of getting seats even for a short distance, the fixed prices (and that too, low) one and all prove an invitation to Americans to travel. The price is three cents a mile. These stages possess the peculiar advantage of disseminating the idea of equality. A Member of Congress is seated beside a laborer who voted for him and they talk together with perfect familiarity. You do not see people putting on airs, which you find so often in France, where a man of the world would blush to travel in so unworthy a vehicle as a public diligence. Private carriages humiliate those unable to afford them; therefore, it is well for America that the nature of things prevents this distinction between private and public vehicles. The ordinary man—that is to say an artisan or workman, who finds himself in these stages with a distinguished citizen, keeps quiet, or tries, if he takes part in the conversation, to rise to the level of the other,—at least he learns something. The man of distinction, for the same reason, has less pride and learns more of the true

sentiments of the people. I travelled all through New Jersey in a coach of this kind with the son of Governor Livingstone. I would not have known it (so unostentatious and plain was his appearance) if, from time to time, the innkeepers at the stops had not saluted him with an air of respectful familiarity. They told me that the Governor himself often availed himself of these stages. You will have an idea of this respected man who, at the same time, wrote, governed, and labored, when you learn that he did himself the honor of being called 'The Jersey Farmer.' The advantages afforded by these stagecoaches cause women to make use of them. They are often alone and unaccompanied by friends, but they have nothing to fear from insolence or from the questionable and sometimes loose conversation of young men—a sort of talk which is, unfortunately, too common in French and English stagecoaches. This association of men and women while travelling cannot but maintain purity of manners, and prove that they are respected; if they were not, women would keep away. I have heard Frenchmen find fault with the frequent change of coaches, but this custom is reasonable and has advantages. In the first place, the drivers are also changed, for they live in different towns along the road, and arrange among themselves to furnish the horses and coaches. A New Yorker drives the

coach as far as Newark, and an inhabitant thereof takes it on to Elizabethtown. Often it is the owner of the coach who drives, sometimes he has it driven by a servant. He is sure, therefore, that his horses will not be worn out with fatigue, and that his coach will be properly kept up, which would not be the case if the drivers were strangers. The same horses and coach take back travellers who are on the return trip, and this arrangement enables the stage-owners to make a low charge. It would cost me about three times as much to travel in France, besides the petty vexations of paying postillions, which is unknown here. It is true that the coaches do not carry heavy luggage but this is not so bad, for travellers take only what is necessary, that is to say, a small piece of hand-luggage. They are, therefore, forced to be simple, and while travelling do not load themselves like Europeans with a lot of troublesome necessities. An American travels with his comb and his razor, a couple of shirts, and some cravats."

Almost all the French travellers express surprise that innkeepers in America were generally men of substance and of importance in the community, frequently being retired army officers, sometimes of high rank, and far different from the low fellows who kept inns in Europe. Chastellux tells of an inn called "Morehouse Tavern,"

whose landlord was a colonel, and Ségur confesses that "I was somewhat surprised upon entering a tavern to find that it was kept by a Captain, a Major, or a Colonel, who conversed equally well on his campaigns against the English, upon the cultivation of his land, the sale of his products, or his income. I was still more astonished when, having replied to some questions concerning my family and having told them that my father was a General and a Cabinet Minister, to have them ask what was his other profession or business. I always found in inns clean rooms, tables well served (abundant but wholesome and simple), drinks a trifle too strong, rum, or cinnamon tea, weak coffee, and excellent tea."

From Cromot du Bourg we learn that not only were our innkeepers occasionally former army officers, but also that some of them were in the learned professions. Chastellux says: "Mr. Poops took me to Mr. Smith's inn; this Mr. Smith was both innkeeper and lawyer. He had quite a pretty library, and his son, whom Mr. Poops presented to me upon my arrival, appeared a well-educated and well-mannered youth. I begged him to dine with us, as well as another young man who was lodged there. This latter had come from the island of Dominique, where he was born, to finish his studies among the Americans, to whom he seemed much more attached than to the English.

He had chosen Easton as healthier and more peaceful than the other towns of America, and he found in Mr. Smith's lessons and books all the instruction that he could desire."

Brissot, the philosophical, perceives good reasons for the importance in the community enjoyed by those who kept the inns: "An innkeeper is naturally respected in a country where money is scarce, because he receives more of it than other people. Money has at its command the necessities of life and—as a result—means a good bed, good things to eat, attentive servants, and yet one does not give tips in the inns nor to the drivers of stage-coaches, which is an excellent plan. Beside the fact that this tipping becomes insupportable because of the persecution it causes, it also gives men an air of baseness, and accustoms them to servile cupidity." Bayard says that "we were lodged with Madame Throkmorton, a relative of General Washington. Board cost three dollars a week. This good American lady, because of carelessness uncommon among those who keep boarding houses, made rather a mess of her affairs. Madame Throkmorton had about forty boarders, for whom she set an excellent table." We also find a unanimity of opinion upon the cleanliness everywhere observable in the inns. From Brissot we learn: "We never stopped at a tavern without finding everywhere cleanliness, decency, and

dignity. The table is often served by a modest and pretty young lady, by an amiable mother whose pleasant face has not been affected by age, and who still preserves her freshness; by men with that air of dignity which equality gives, and who are neither ignoble nor low like most of our innkeepers."

The Frenchmen never overcame their surprise at the lack of distinction of caste between the host and the customers of an inn; even unaristocratic Brissot noticed that "the innkeeper (Mrs. Robinson) was taking tea with her maids; she invited us to join her and we accepted. We have nothing, and I repeat it, which is comparable to this in France. The maids in the inns are dressed very neatly and have a modest and honest appearance, and this remark may be made in every part of the United States." From the exiled aristocrat, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, we have: "It appeared strange to Europeans to see the mistresses of inns and their housemaids (who served the dinner and breakfast) sit down while waiting till you ask them for a plate; and that the innkeeper attended to your wants at table with his hat on his head,—but in America the innkeeper is often a Captain or a Major. I have seen stagecoach drivers who were Colonels, so simple is life in America." From Lafayette we have something to the same effect: "These things

are very different from Europe. The master and the mistress sit down at table with you, do the honors of an excellent repast, and when you leave, you pay without bargaining. When you do not want to go to an inn, you find country-houses where the fact that you are a good American causes you to be received with the attentions which you would have in Europe from a friend."

It is Chastellux that sets out most in detail this un-European system of paid hospitality, generally to be found in such towns as lacked inns: "The place where I was to stop was Farmington. Mr. Wadsworth, fearing that I would not find a good inn there, gave me a letter of introduction to one of his relatives named Lewis; he assured me that I would be well received without inconveniencing anybody, and need not be embarrassed because I would pay just as if at an inn; and it was true, for when the inns are bad or the distances between them do not conform with the days' journeys which one plans to make, it is the custom in America to ask hospitality from some private individual who has room for you in his house, and for your horses in his stable. In this way one converses with one's host as an equal, but pays him as though he were only an innkeeper." He comments again upon this custom: "We left there about noon in order to go on

twenty-four miles to the only house where we could find a comfortable place. It was not an inn, but the proprietor, Mr. Hunter, was glad to receive strangers. This difference between a real inn and paid hospitality is to the financial advantage of foreigners, because in America, as in England, innkeepers pay high taxes, and they reimburse themselves by exorbitant charges. Mr. Hunter received us very well and in a very clean house." Du Bourg tells us that at Mr. Wacker's house near Baltimore, "they gave us an excellent supper and excellent beds, our servants and horses were well treated, and when it came time to pay, he refused to accept more than five shillings." Nor was there any danger of travellers faring badly at these private houses, for "the Americans live well," says Brissot, "and treat strangers as they treat themselves."

Perrin du Lac was the only one to make any reference to the keeping of a register of guests. "One day in Newark," says he, "the landlord showed us a thick book in which it was the custom to inscribe the names of strangers, at the head of which we read those of Washington and his wife. Some had added phrases expressing their impressions of this picturesque place. The French ones had the distinctive character of their nation—love of pleasure and of women; the English were profound or libertine, but the Americans

were content to write their names without adding anything thereto."

These writers do not seem unanimous upon the question of expense at American taverns. De Kalb writes, June 18, 1777: "Food, lodgings, horses—everything is extremely high." Brissot says: "We dined at the tavern at Cambridge. I never paid so dearly for a dinner—about ten shillings or eight French livres for beef, two chickens, a half bottle of madeira, a pot of porter, and two cups of coffee. The coffee alone cost us a shilling. It would be unfair not to give the reason for this dearness;—Cambridge is a university town and much frequented." On the other hand, while going from New York to Philadelphia Michaux (junior) paid at the taverns where the coach stopped "a piastre for dinner, a half of that for supper or breakfast, and the same for lodging." Surely not exorbitant prices! Brissot also shows us that reasonable arrangements could be made: "Board by the week—and almost all the strangers and Members of Congress are in boarding-houses—was four or five dollars, which is thirty-one to forty-two livres, and one paid extra for French wine." Michaux (junior) remarks that "boarding houses in New York charge 8 to 12 piastres a week. Living is cheaper there than in Charleston," where they charge "12 to 20 piastres a week." In Philadelphia he found the prices even lower, paying only 6 to 10 piastres

a week, but La Rochefoucauld records them as "8 to 12, without wine, lights, or a fire in your bedroom." Deux-Ponts noticed that board cost about twice as much per week in Philadelphia and the other larger cities near the seaboard as in the towns of the interior.

There is one point, however, upon which the foreigners are all quite decided in their criticism, nor will you blame them when you hear from St. Méry that he "protested against the American custom prevalent in all hotels of putting another man into the bed in which you were sleeping." Michaux (junior) says: "There were always several beds in each sleeping room," and he reports that at Mr. Patrick Archibald's near Pittsburgh there were four beds in one room to accommodate the ten members of his family, plus any passing strangers who might wish to spend the night! No wonder the French thought us an easy-going and harmonious people! La Rochefoucauld says of Bath, New York: "Although we slept in the tavern we passed almost all our days in the Captain's house where we were quieter than in that noisy inn, no bigger than your hand, and so full of people that one night we slept twenty-five in two rooms and six beds, and these rooms were only little garrets open to the wind and the rain." This must have been a singularly distressing custom, and it is not surprising that even the imper-

turbable Ségur says that he found it difficult to accustom himself thereto. Prince de Broglie gratefully records: "I had so great an aversion to sleeping in company that I was accorded the favor of not being waked up during the night by some unknown newcomer." The Marquise de la Tour du Pin was awakened at Lebanon, New York, by a volley of French oaths from an adjoining room. Next morning her husband's friend Monsieur Chambeau, told her that "about midnight he had been aroused by a man who without more ado had slipped into the empty half of his bed. Furious at this invasion, he promptly jumped out the other side and passed the night in a chair listening to the snores of his companion, who seemed in no wise disturbed by his anger."

St. Méry praises the watchmen who, in Philadelphia, called out the hours from 10 P. M. to 5 A. M., and comments upon how pleasant it is to lie in a warm bed and hear the watchmen shout that it is snowing outside! We can hardly agree with him when he adds: "They also possess a peculiar value for travellers because they arouse them at any hour desired so that they may set out upon their journey betimes." Yes, but how about the interrupted slumber of the rest of the street?

In closing, and by way of realizing how much

better our ancestors fared while on a journey than any one then travelling in Europe, Brissot's conclusions are illuminating: "We reached the first inn at Spenser, a growing village in the midst of the woods; thus far there are only three or four houses to be seen. The inn was only half built, but the completed portion had that air of cleanliness which pleases because it announces comfort and those simple and refined customs of which there is not even a suspicion in our villages. The rooms were clean, the beds good, the linen white, the supper passable; cider, tea, punch, all that for a shilling and a half or two shillings a head; we were four. Now, my friend, compare this order of things with that which you have encountered a hundred times in our French inns; dirty ugly rooms, beds full of bugs (those insects which Sterne called 'the legitimate inhabitants of inns, always supposing,' said he, 'that a long possession gives a legal right'), linen badly bleached and giving out an unpleasant odor, evil coverlids, wine almost always spoiled, and all this for its weight in gold; rapacious servants, disagreeable except when their hopes are aroused by your style of travelling, rushing toward a rich arrival but insolent toward one whom they consider of small importance;—there you have the eternal torments which attend travellers in France,—add to those the fear of being robbed, and the precau-

tions which one must take every night to prevent theft, while throughout the United States you travel without fear and unharmed, and, even deep in the forests, you repose tranquilly in open rooms or houses with unlocked doors. Now judge which is the country that deserves the name of civilized, and which one offers the aspect of general happiness! Cleanliness you know, my friend, is happiness, and this is why you find it everywhere among the Americans, even down to the smallest details."

CHAPTER X

EDUCATION, COLLEGES, NEWSPAPERS, INTEREST IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Suppose that some French traveller, who spoke no English, should find himself in the Grand Central Station, New York City, with no interpreter at hand, and suppose he tried, by speaking Latin, to make himself understood by some one of the passing throng—how long do you suppose he would have to wait to accomplish his purpose? It makes one hungry and thirsty and sleepy to think upon the hours and the endurance such a task would necessitate! And would this not be equally true in any part of the United States except in certain learned university circles? Yet during Revolutionary times the ability to speak Latin was not uncommon among our educated classes. Blanchard, quartermaster of the French forces, tells of a trip to a garden two miles out of Providence with General Varnum, commander of the local militia, to play at bowls, and incidentally to partake of punch and tea; although he knew only a few words of English, he got on famously, because "General Varnum spoke Latin."

On another occasion a hussar who spoke Latin acted as his interpreter while purchasing supplies. Nor were incidents of that nature reported only by this erudite quartermaster, whose interesting narrative shows his enthusiasm for things American tempered only by his disgust at American bread, and the constant difficulty of procuring sufficient for Rochambeau's troops, even on one occasion bringing down on his perplexed head the wrath of that exacting commander. Times have changed, and that many of our college-bred folk could then converse in Latin may or may not have been a fine thing, depending on one's point of view. But there can be no difference of opinion as to the wide enjoyment of a common-school education by the contemporaries of those early linguists, which was then as surprising to foreigners as is to us the facility in Latin speech just cited. St. Méry was only one of many to be amazed that "everybody in the United States can read and write, although almost no French sailor is able to do so," and Michaux agrees that "it is very rare to find an American who does not know how both to read and to write." Even the ever-critical Beaujour admits that "primary instruction is widely spread in the different States, and especially in those along the Atlantic, where almost everyone knows how to read, write, and figure." Dupont believed that "paternal tender-

ness, by not setting children to work in the fields till very late, is the reason for the general spread of education." Bonnet was much struck by the fact that, not content with schools like those in Europe, "in several places they have also established night schools for such young people as have to work during the day."

The acquisition in youth of this general boon was apt to be a painful and somewhat harrowing experience, if Bayard is to be believed: "The schoolmasters employ a system better suited for training slaves than forming citizens. An English or American school-teacher is the most dreary and pedantic personage that limited knowledge has ever produced. Dr. Benjamin Rush has in vain recommended the humane methods of J. J. Rousseau. The pedants have unanimously rejected them, and continue to purchase a very modest amount of information with blows of the whip. Their chief argument in favor of that method is that otherwise their dignity might be compromised by the pranks of a bright and lively child,—that the discipline of their school runs this terrible risk. 'But you should dismiss the insubordinate,' you answer them. 'A detestable plan,' replies the vendor of knowledge, 'there goes my pay for a whole quarter right out of my pocket! It is better to whip scholars than to let them go.' The unfortunates who toil under the direction of these pedants soon lose

that sweetness of character which they took to school, and you see them emerging from their torture-chamber tormenting and beating each other." As balm for our aroused sympathies, and an antidote against a too-confiding belief in youthful torture as depicted by Bayard, it is refreshing to read of Blanchard's experience, who, a few days after his landing, visited a school in Newport, and remarking upon the handwriting of a little girl of nine years, whose beauty and modesty he admired, and whose name (Abigale Earl) he kept, puts down in his journal: "She is what I would like to see my little girl when she reaches her age," and he writes in her copybook at the end of the little girl's name, "very pretty." "The schoolmaster," he added, "had neither the air of a pedant nor of a missionary, but of a father of a family."

Our system of co-education of young children was a novelty to the Frenchmen. Says Perrin du Lac: "What a difference between their system of education and ours! With us, from the tenderest years, the little girls are separated from the little boys, and kept under the eye of their mothers or governesses. Here, the two sexes are continually thrown together throughout their childhood, go to the same schools and are taught alike. When their public education is finished at the age of twelve or thirteen, the girls lose

none of the freedom enjoyed in childhood. Their school-friends, or those made elsewhere, visit them freely whether or not their parents are present."

It was a sore trial to several of the Frenchmen that we did not promptly decide to discard the English language at the same time that we threw off their authority. Even the wildest optimist of them all could not have foreseen a day when the fringe of colonies along the Atlantic would have grown into a nation with twice the population of the British Isles, thus becoming much the largest English-speaking power, and therefore there were then some grounds for the French desire that we should renounce the language of as well as our allegiance to our English foes. But which tongue was to be adopted as our national language? Here was a puzzling problem. Two suggestions then advanced deserve notice, because they came from such thoughtful and acute observers as Brissot and Chastellux. The former holds that nothing abrupt should be attempted, as a change in our speech was already commencing and would inevitably develop: "They should, if possible, seek to obliterate their origin, and remove every trace of it, and since their language will always give them the lie, they should make such innovations in it as they have attempted in their Constitution. What should prevent their

adopting certain terms from the French? The Americans are coming nearer to other peoples, and they are moving further away from the English. They are developing a language which will be theirs alone, and there will be an American language." Chastellux, on the other hand, discusses a proposition that we should adopt Hebrew in its entirety as a substitute for English. If he were to return in the flesh and see how numerous are the Hebrew signs displayed in New York shop windows, he would conclude that the general esteem enjoyed by our Hebrew fellow citizens must have made the adoption of their language a more serious proposal now than it was when he wrote of it so flippantly. Neither of those writers took so gloomy a view as Beaujour, who, while despondently submitting to our continued use of English, regretfully points out that "they will never have, or at least not till very late, a literature of their own, because they lack a national language, and because English literature will take the place of their own!" Shades of Poe and Hawthorne, of Bret Harte and Mark Twain!

Chastellux has already told us of his astonishment that Mrs. Meredith, a Philadelphia lady, should know as much of French history as he himself, but even greater was his surprise when, turning from the realms of society to the humbler sphere of a public inn, he finds on the parlor

table at Courtheath Tavern, "Milton, Addison, Richardson, and several other books of that sort," the property of the tavern-keeper's two young sisters, and read by them when not busy waiting on travellers! Another glimpse at the education then enjoyed by American women is furnished by that distinguished exile, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, who travelled so extensively in the United States during 1795, 1796, and 1797. He noticed at the house of old General Warren that "his wife, of the same age as he, is much more interesting in conversation. Contrary to the custom of American women, she has been busy all her life with all sorts of reading. She has even printed one or two successful volumes of poetry, and has written a history of the Revolution which she had the modesty and good taste not to wish published until after her death. This good lady of seventy is amiable and has lost none of her activity, nor of her sensibility, for she still mourns a son whom she lost in the War. They assured me that the literary occupations of this estimable dame have not diverted her attention from the duties of housekeeping." These two examples, from widely differing social spheres, taken together make out an excellent case for the adequacy of the education of our women, whatever their walk in life.

As forecasters of the future, upon anything

Mercy Warren, wife of General Warren.

From the painting by Copley.

except the generality of a glorious growth for the United States, the French were distinctly unsuccessful—upon any details of the said growth they usually guessed wrong: Chesapeake Bay did *not* become our great centre, we did *not* grow steadily more lazy and lymphatic, etc., etc.; one successful prophecy by Beaujour anent our advance in the mechanical arts therefore deserves especial attention: "Although the Americans have made little progress in science and the arts, they carefully cultivate the more usual branches of learning, and one may judge from results that they have no less aptitude for them than other nations. They have very learned men in medicine and natural history, such as Dr. Rush, Wistar, Muhlenburg, Michel, Barton, and some very distinguished amateurs of agriculture like President Jefferson, Chancellor Livingston, and Humphries. In inventions, they have had Franklin, Rittenhausen, Gould, and they now have Fulton. They even pretend that the squaring of the circle, attributed to the Englishman, Hadley, is the invention of their compatriot, Godfrey. While Americans show a marked inclination for science and the mechanical arts, they show less for literature and the fine arts. Nevertheless they have had some writers who merit distinction such as Ramsay, Franklin, Jefferson, Barlow; the latter's poem 'The Colombiad,' although lack-

ing animation and grace, still shows some originality, and is full of liberal ideas and generous sentiments. One may therefore predict for Americans the greatest success in science and the mechanical arts, but not the same successes in the fine arts."

That our colleges were performing a great and a patriotic service for the rising generation, and therefore for the future of the nation, was the unanimous opinion of our observers, who realized how potent was their agency for good. Chastellux, in one of his quaint moods, even goes so far as to credit the college of William and Mary with a "miracle, that is to say, it made me a Doctor of Law!"—an agreeably modest way of saying that on May 1, 1782, they presented him with an honorary degree.

Before further consideration of colleges and college life, there is a serious admission to make, which to some readers will prove a disheartening one, viz.: that, except for Brissot's comment that Harvard's "surroundings are charming, open, and extensive, with space for the young men's exercise," there is absolutely nothing in all these memoirs to indicate that athletic sports even existed in American colleges. What a dreadful exposition of the inadequacy of early college life! How much times have changed can be seen by reflecting that in order to fill the sixty-seven thousand seats of the

The colleges at Cambridge.

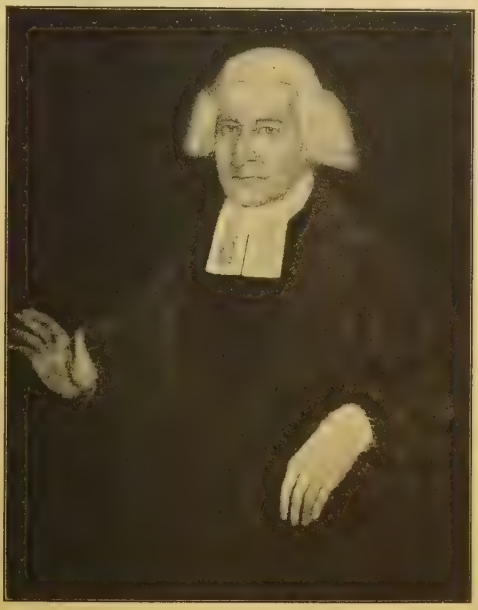
After the engraving by S. Hill in the collection of Charles A. Munn.

new stadium at Yale University (locally styled "the Bowl") it would, as we have already seen, have required more than the combined population of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. All that the French had to say of college life in those early days may not meet with the unqualified approval of the modern undergraduate. For instance, such ideas as Dupont's, that studies should begin at 5 A. M. during the summer and at 6 A. M. in winter.

To the patriotic stand taken by all our colleges many glowing tributes are paid, and in these encomiums the students share equally with their instructors. No finer type of college-bred patriot can be cited than Captain Nathan Hale, Yale, 1773, who died with the glorious regret on his lips that he had but one life to give for his country. The colleges strove for the cause with brain as well as brawn, as appears from more than a few appreciations of the excellent political pamphlets of President Stiles of Yale, and other collegians like him. They taught with their lives as well as their voices, did these early instructors—"living books," Chastellux calls them, of a "country already so distinguished for academies and universities equal to those of the old world."

Warm approval of the system of removing colleges from the influence of large cities is accorded by Abbé Robin, a chaplain in Rochambeau's army, whose memoirs are of more than

usual interest, so mellow are his appreciations of men and things: "There has been shown us in Europe the physical and moral danger of education in large cities. The Bostonians have done more, they have prevented it. Their university is at Cambridge, four miles from Boston on the banks of the River Charles, in a delightful and healthy situation." Its site is also approved by Brissot for the same reason: "This university is far enough from Boston so that the tumult of business does not at all interrupt study. There one can give oneself over to that meditation which solitude alone permits. It is also sufficiently removed so that the arrival of strangers and that sort of license which is carried on in a commercial city (even in a free State) shall have no influence upon the habits of the students." Of another institution, which had been located in a city, we read: "One regrets only that this new academy had not been erected far from the city, in some rural retreat, where the scholars would have been further removed from the tumults of business, and the dissipations and pleasures so numerous in large cities." Thus wrote J. Hector Saint-John de Crèvecœur, the most widely read of all these French writers, member of learned societies on both sides of the Atlantic, friend of Washington and Franklin, and for some time French Consul at New York. He sold for thirty guineas his



Ezra Stiles, president of Yale.

From the portrait by Reuben Moulthrop, 1794.

famous "Letters from an American Farmer," a book that Washington declared would "afford a great deal of profitable and amusive information"; neither of them foresaw the great vogue it was destined to enjoy, both in its English and French forms.

The individual universities and colleges of our country elicited frequent comments and general praise from the French. Of Harvard we learn from Brissot that "Boston has had the glory of giving the first university to America. The building in which the students and professors assemble is situated in a superb plain four miles from Boston in a place called Cambridge. The building is divided into different parts very well distributed. As the students, who arrive from all over the United States, are numerous, and the number is constantly increasing, additions will have to be built. The course of study is almost the same as at the University of Oxford." He gives an account of Mr. "Beaudouin" the president, and of the distinguished professors who assist him, and then goes on to describe how patriotic is the solemn festival celebrated the third Wednesday of July, in honor of learning: "This festival which takes place in all the American colleges, but on different days, is called the 'Commencement.' It is similar to the exercises and distribution of prizes in our colleges. It is a

day of joy for Boston; almost all the inhabitants, with all the government officers, set out for the beautiful plain of Cambridge. The most successful students there display their talent in the presence of the public, and receive prizes, and these academic exercises, of which patriotic subjects form the principal part, end with an entertainment out of doors at which frankness, gaiety, and the most touching fraternity reign." In these days of constant increase in the cost of living, it is disheartening, not to say exasperating, to read in La Rochefoucauld that the Harvard undergraduates "are subject to the modest tax of sixteen dollars for each one of the four years that they stay there, and six dollars per month pays for their food. If after their four years of residence, they desire to prolong their study to take degrees, they no longer pay the sixteen dollars, but only the rent of their rooms."

Of Yale there are numerous and favorable accounts. It is comforting to learn that "the young students, who are there in great numbers, are subjected to very wise regulations." La Rochefoucauld reports that "there is in New Haven a college of an already ancient foundation, where they assure you that the instruction is as good as in any other of the United States," and Mandrillon agrees that in New Haven "the instruction of youth is very carefully conducted, and to

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Buildings of Yale College, New Haven.

From the engraving by A. P. Doolittle, 1807.

that end they have founded a college which is largely attended." That same city so highly appreciated the value of the services the French were rendering our country, not only by their swords, but also their pens, that they voted the freedom of the city to sundry soldiers and litterateurs of that friendly nation. This act enabled the Marquis de Condorcet, when adding four letters to Mazzei's book, to use the nom de plume of "A Burgess of New-Heaven." Candor compels the admission that the spelling used by him for the last word was only an unintentional compliment to life in the City of Elms.

Because of the long sojourn of the French army in Rhode Island, there are frequent complimentary references to Brown University, although La Rochefoucauld ranks it after Yale and Harvard: "The college is maintained at Providence by legacies, gifts, and private subscriptions, but as it is incompletely kept up, families who wish to give their children a more careful education send them to Massachusetts or Connecticut. The principal gifts to the college have been made by a Baptist. He has imposed the condition that the chief posts and most of the others also must be filled by men of that persuasion, and that fact has drawn to this State a greater number of that sect than of any other."

Because of the sedate reputation which Prince-

ton has earned and long enjoyed, the author does not hesitate to discharge his duty as historian by quoting in full St. Méry's remarks concerning that distinguished institution: "Princeton has one college, with a brick wall around a dirty courtyard, which is a bad example to set the students. There is also an old cannon which is in bad condition. In Nassau Hall are forty-two bedrooms, each for three students. Although there is room for one hundred and twenty students, there are generally only about eighty in residence, mostly from Virginia and the two Carolinas. The life there is too easy-going. Gaming and loose living occupy the students more than study." Chastellux was a most discriminating observer, so that over against those just quoted shall be set his remarks upon what he calls "Prince-Town": "This town is situated on a sort of slightly elevated plateau sloping off on every side. It has but one street, which is formed by the highway. The houses are to the number of sixty or eighty, all pretty well built, but they are hardly noticed because one's attention is at once called to an immense building easily seen from a distance. It is a college that the State of New Jersey built several years before the War. As this building is remarkable for its size alone, it is useless to describe it. I dismounted for a moment to go through the vast

edifice. I was joined almost immediately by Mr. Withersporn [*sic*], President of the University. He is a man of at least sixty years of age, a Member of Congress, and very highly esteemed in his country. In meeting me he spoke French, but I easily perceived that he had acquired the use of this language rather by reading than by conversation, which did not prevent me from replying to him in French, for I saw that he was very pleased to show that he knew it. With an annual expenditure of forty guineas, parents can keep their children in this college. Lodging and the teachers take up half of this sum, and the rest is for food, either at the college itself or in boarding-houses in the town. Since the War this useful institution has fallen into decay. They had gotten together a great number of books, most of which had been dispersed. The English had even taken from the chapel the portrait of the King of England, but the Americans were easily consoled for this loss, saying that they did not want a King,—not even a painted one."

Of far wider scope than the educational influences exercised by our universities and colleges is, and always has been, that wielded by our newspapers, and from the very beginning of our republic the character of those educating and enlightening publications has been of an excellence unsurpassed in foreign lands. One has only to

recall that Benjamin Franklin, our first and greatest diplomat, was a member of that worthy guild to realize the high type of many of the men concerned in the presentation of current events to our public thirsty for information. No wonder Robin remarks that "almost all take the newspaper which is printed in their neighborhood," or that "all, from the Congressman to the workman, read one or other of the thousands of newspapers which appear." Dupont observed that while "a large part of the nation reads the Bible, all of it assiduously peruse the newspapers. The fathers read them aloud to their children while the mothers are preparing breakfast, something which takes at least three quarters of an hour every morning." "Very numerous," says Deux-Ponts, "are their newspapers or gazettes, infallible barometers of public opinion, for their editors would have no sale if they did not print what the majority liked. Back in the country they only appear weekly, but in towns of the second class twice a week, while in the large cities they come out morning, noon, and night. This multiplicity of papers, dangerous where unnecessary, is advantageous in the United States. It would be difficult to invent a better guide for public opinion." Brissot realizes that "those newspapers are the channel of information in America, and that is why they are kept so gener-

Nassau Hall.

After an old print which appears in "An Account of the College of New Jersey, 1764."

ally informed." Says Bonnet: "They take an interest in politics because they read the newspapers, of which more than 30,000 sheets are published each week in the five New England states alone."

Minister Ternant wrote home, August 19, 1792: "The newspapers are filled daily with articles either defending or bitterly attacking the new federal government, as well as the actions of its principal agents, and each party seeks thus to win the approaching elections." So important did he consider it that his government be kept constantly advised of the opinions expressed in the American newspapers that he regularly forwarded it two of them published in Philadelphia, "one (the *General Advertiser*) is the property of the celebrated Dr. Franklin's grandson and successor as printer, and the other (the *National Gazette*) is edited by a Mr. Fresneau, an employee of the State Department." The great political usefulness of these numerous public prints especially appealed to Lafayette: "In this happy country, where everyone hears of and follows the course of public events, newspapers prove of great assistance in the Revolutionary cause." In Boston, says Bourgeois, "there are printed, just as in London, not only books but also daily sheets called 'papers,' which have encouraged both credulity and fanaticism among them—what a curious collection it would be if

there were gotten together all the different gazettes published in Boston, and circulated thence throughout the United States!" He seemed to think the editors capable of sometimes coloring the news to suit their own wishes, and General Moreau also thought "the newspapers of this land do not always tell the truth, when it is a question of their own interests."

Savarin gives amusing testimony to the prompt enterprise displayed by the New York newspapers, which "reported fairly accurately" a drinking bout in which he and two French friends were pitted against two Englishmen from Jamaica. This was in 1794, and he tells us that what the New York reporters printed of this bacchic struggle was copied by other papers all over the country. There is something quite modern in the story of how Perrin du Lac learned of the enterprise of our reporters before he had time to notice anything else American. The boat on which he arrived was inspected by the medical officer from the quarantine station just off Staten Island. "Hardly had we again hoisted sail than we saw approaching several newspaper men anxious to get the latest news from Europe. We gave them such newspapers as we had, and in return therefor they took ashore with them such passengers as wished to land."

Even in the then most sparsely settled regions,

the newspapers' educating influence was constantly exerted. "In the province of Main [*sic*] they only print one newspaper twice a week," says La Rochefoucauld, "but that is an important one. It is widely circulated in the country districts, and read with interest. Newspapers are more numerous in New Hampshire, three of them are printed at Portsmouth, two at Dover, and one at Darmouth [*sic*] on the Connecticut River, where the state college is located." St. Méry tells us that in Norfolk, Virginia, there were two printing offices, two newspapers, and a loan library, but he gives the palm to Philadelphia, with its thirty-one printing offices, and thirteen newspapers. In this conclusion several other writers agree, among them Brissot: "There is no city on this continent where they print so much as in Philadelphia. The printing offices, the newspapers, and the booksellers are as numerous there as the booksellers are throughout the State." While speaking of Lexington's two presses, each printing a biweekly gazette, Michaux (junior) comments that "some of the paper is made in this country and costs a third more than in France; writing-paper is imported from England."

It is perhaps surprising to learn that the early American gazettes did not confine themselves to neighborhood, or even to American news. It was from a Boston newspaper that the Marquise de

la Tour du Pin learned that her father, Colonel Arthur Dillon, had been guillotined in Paris, April 13, 1794, and she adds: "Indeed all the news from France was printed in the American papers as soon as received." While dining at General Schuyler's in Albany, she learned from a local newspaper of the overthrow of Robespierre, and she comments on the personal satisfaction this news gave to Talleyrand and Beaumetz, who were also present on that occasion. It was from an American newspaper that Chateaubriand learned the exciting news of the flight from Paris of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, and their arrest at Varennes, which decided him to return to France and aid their cause by joining the army of the French princes. Brissot records that "Salem, like all American cities, has a printing press and a newspaper which copies from the newspapers of other States. While waiting for supper there I read a newspaper in which was the speech delivered by Monsieur de l'Eprémésnil when he was arrested in open parliament (in Paris). What an admirable invention is the printing press!—it puts all nations into touch. It electrifies one by the recital of fine actions in one country that will soon become common to all." Minister Fauchet criticised French newspapers for not reaching our standard in printing foreign news, and complained, May 17, 1795, to

Dartmouth College, showing chapel and hall.

From the engraving by S. Hill in the collection of Charles A. Munn.

the Committee of Public Safety: "I cannot avoid expressing to you my astonishment at seeing the French papers full of absurd stories about America, despite my continually sending you an account of the noteworthy events here."

In view of what we have just learned of how large was the reading public enjoyed by the numerous American newspapers, we are quite prepared to find the Frenchmen encountering a wide-spread interest in political questions. Ségur had hardly landed and started for Philadelphia when he mentions that "as all took a great interest in public affairs, before allowing me to go, I had to reply as best I might to countless questions which they asked." Even more forcibly is this evidenced in the episode of Rochambeau's vehicle breaking down on the road near Windham, Connecticut, necessitating the services at night of a carter whom they found already in bed: "The man was sick, and though they offered to fill his hat with guineas he would not work at night, but when he heard who it was, he did so. Called out a second time, he still asked further political questions, and ended by saying: 'Well! you are worthy men, you shall have your wagon by five o'clock in the morning, but before setting to work and without wishing to pry into your secrets,—are you pleased with Washington, and was he with you?' We assured

him that we were. His patriotism was satisfied, and he kept his word." "All the agricultural people in the interior," said Rochambeau, who recounts the foregoing anecdote in his memoirs, "and almost all the landholders of Connecticut are animated by this public spirit, which should serve as a model for many others." Beaujour remarks, "The conversation of the men generally turns upon politics," and Chastellux adds: "Every American conversation has to wind up with politics." Bayard evidently agrees with the two foregoing: "After the ladies withdrew, we talked politics. The liberality of the sentiments of these two Americans as well as their education encouraged me to hazard some reflections on the mode of elections adopted in the United States." Bayard was not the only Frenchman to notice that Americans loved to talk politics at table, for Minister Adet reported home in 1795 that "it is after dinner that one relaxes, discusses matters, and it is during the toasts that confidence and persuasion can slip in. Your Minister could do nothing here did he not often have Congressmen at his table." Mazzei concludes that "they seek to inform themselves upon public affairs because they find it to their interest. The progress made by the American people, since the beginning of the Revolution till now, in the matter of reasoning upon this sort of affairs, is really astonishing."

This same Mazzei was the indiscreet person who, by quoting Jefferson in his letter of April 24, 1796, to the Directory, which it hastened to publish in the *Moniteur* of January 25, 1797, was (according to Robert de Crèvecœur, biographer of his distinguished progenitor) the means of causing the estrangement between Jefferson and Washington which persisted so long. That Jefferson cherished no ill-feeling against Mazzei for this indiscretion is clear from the friendly tone of a subsequent letter from the former to the latter.

Nor did the interest in public affairs, everywhere noticeable in the United States, evidence itself in speech alone. Baron de Kalb, that intelligent investigator of the French Government, who ended his career so gloriously at the battle of Camden, reported to his Foreign Office that, even while there was still peace, "Boston has suspended all commerce with the port of London. The people are no longer willing to use anything brought from or made there." The women even denied themselves their cherished solace of tea in order to injure the English tea trade, and the men, on the occasion of the "Boston Tea Party," changed this passive resistance into an active one by turning Boston Harbor into a stronger infusion of the costly herb than the English authorities could stomach. Our early women-folk were as sturdy as their consorts in practical demonstrations of their keen

interest in public affairs, as appears from Lafayette's letter of October 7, 1780, to his wife: "The women have made and are still making subscriptions to aid the soldiers. When this idea was broached I made myself your ambassador to the ladies of Philadelphia, and you are down for one hundred guineas on their list." Chastellux's account of a call upon Mrs. "Beach" (Franklin's daughter), gives a pleasant picture of how practical was the women's patriotism: "Simple in her manners as her respected father, she has also his benevolence. She led us into a room filled with recent handiwork of Philadelphia ladies. This work was neither embroidered waistcoats, nor sets of lace, nor even gold embroidery, —it was shirts for the Pennsylvania soldiers. These ladies had provided the cloth at their own expense, and had taken real pleasure in cutting and sewing them themselves. On each shirt was marked the name of the lady or girl who had made it, and there were 2,200 of them!"

Connecticut was not behind Maryland in setting patriotism before thrift when her interest in public affairs was appealed to, for after the victory at Yorktown, Rochambeau says that on his way to his transports at Boston "the French Army, in its march, crossed Connecticut, and Governor 'Trumbold' and his Council issued a proclamation requesting all their fellow-citizens

not to increase prices during the march of the French Army. Everybody conformed thereto so generously that each soldier's mess obtained daily at a very low price all sorts of food to add to their ordinary rations." Beaujour believes our zest for politics was due to our English origin: "They get their political opinions from those nations from which they spring, and as most of them are of English origin, they have carried to America all those elements of discord which agitate England. In every State they are divided into two great parties, like those of the Whigs and Tories, and what is most tiresome is that neither of those parties knows exactly what it wants, or at least takes no steps to obtain it." Then follow four pages of what he understands to be American politics, but he can hardly be said to unravel the mysteries thereof. Comte de Fersen showed a much keener insight than he when he remarked: "It is a country which will surely be very happy . . . if the two political parties which now divide it do not make it suffer the fate of Poland and of so many other republics." Milfort found the political strife between our "Wigth and Toris" so violent and objectionable that he took refuge among the Indians of the backwoods, where he lived for twenty years! It is pleasant to see that Perrin du Lac was impressed by the fact that, "although a strong party spirit animates

almost all the members of Congress, and although the Senate and the Executive show it in all their deliberations, it never fails to yield to a regard for the common weal, which reunites all those patriotic individuals when anything touches public prosperity." As Perrin du Lac refers to Congress let us read the Duc de Broglie's account of its meeting-place: "The Hall of Congress is on the ground floor, very large, and with no other adornments than a poor engraving of Montgomery, another of Washington, and the Declaration of Independence. There are thirteen tables covered with green cloth, and at each of these, during the sessions, sits one of the principal representatives of each of the thirteen States. The President of the Congress is placed in the centre of the room on a sort of throne, the clerk below him." He also remarks that in a wing of the building next this hall, rooms are provided for ambassadors from the savage tribes.

A little time ago, a friend of the author remarked to him that the worthies of the Revolution and the times in which they lived had become so idealized as to seem to him no more human than a steel engraving. As a protest against this use of denatured alcohol for preserving the memories of our glorious past, and by way of proving that our worthy sires were quite as human as their descendants, it seems well to

City election at the State-house, Philadelphia.

From the original water-color by John Lewis Krimmell in the hall of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

conclude this chapter with Bayard's description of scenes on election day, which for real human nature rival those which Mr. Pickwick and Samuel Weller witnessed: "Your election days are days of debauch and quarrels. Candidates publicly offer drinks to whosoever will give them votes. Those who would excuse everything reply that the intention of the candidates is only to offer refreshments to those abandoning their work and coming from a distance. It is a great scandal that these candidates are charged with this entertainment, and another that the voters should live so far away from the place of election. The taverns are occupied by party adherents. The citizens take their stand under the banners of the candidates, and the voting-place is often surrounded by men armed with sticks, who push back and intimidate the voters of the opposing party. Therefore, it is not the people who register their decision but the factions which fight about it. After the candidates have published their platforms in the public prints, their adherents start the campaign, and give drinks to those they wish to win over. To get the recruits all together, the public is often notified to assemble on such a day at such a tavern in order to clarify the opinion of the voters. If the candidate has oratorical talent, he is to be found there haranguing his friends and awaiting with security the day

of election. The country-people come on horseback, and in troops of two by two. Drums beaten by hirelings who cry out 'Huzza!' at the top of their lungs, complete the martial confusion on election day. Women solicit votes, running from shop to shop to get them." "This is a true picture of what happens in the maritime cities," replied Mr. Smith, "but it is overdrawn if you are trying to depict election-days in the interior cities." And General Dumas makes a similar geographical distinction: "The elections of country members are free from bribery. A man may seduce some of his fellow-citizens by his eloquence, but he cannot win their votes by his money."

CHAPTER XI

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

So strictly was the Sabbath observed in Revolutionary days that "some pleasant dames, rather jolly souls, whom I went to see in Providence, would not even sing on Saturday evening. Last September on my way from Philadelphia to the Hudson, something happened which shows how general is this observance. One Sunday some officers came to call, and proposed we play a game of reversi, but the landlady indignantly burst in and tried to snatch away the cards. I had difficulty in quieting her, and had to have an Irish priest who spoke English explain that our religious principles did not forbid playing cards on Sunday." And the foregoing was written, not by some wild young blade of the French army, but by the conscientious, hard-working commissary, Blanchard! "From Saturday evening on," says Bourgeois, "all doors are shut, nor do they open until Monday morning, and during the hours of divine service no one is allowed to walk about the streets on pain of imprisonment. Strangers alone are exempt from this regulation, but even they must take care not to make the

slightest noise." And if perchance they did indulge in untimely noises—what happened? The answer shall come from Chaplain Robin, who will a tale of woe unfold fully as diverting as Blanchard's,—also about an unwary stranger who nearly got into trouble by choosing the wrong day on which to be noisy: "One Sunday, a Frenchman who lived with me took it into his head to play the flute. The people started to mob him, and would have carried matters to extremes if the landlord had not stopped him!" This unfortunate man had evidently not been warned that "Sunday is observed with the greatest respect. All business, no matter how important, stops. Even the most innocent pleasures are not permitted. Boston, a city of large population, where there is always a great deal going on, seems a desert on these days. One meets nobody on the streets, and if you happen upon someone, you do not dare stop and talk with him!" These two serio-comic episodes (both, by the way, chaperoned by priests) demonstrate that neither the flute-player nor the card-players were merely victims of local "blue-laws," but that the will of the American people themselves was reflected in those regulations. It took a little time for this un-European fact to dawn upon these friendly strangers. Nor was this phenomenon true of municipal statutes alone. Our Declaration of

Independence was widely known in Europe and greatly admired, but very few of the contemporary Frenchmen had any idea, before they landed here, how completely that immortal document voiced the deeper feelings of the people, and particularly in those passages which attribute our liberty to the Divine Author. They came to learn, and with sober astonishment, that the lives of our ancestors proved that their Declaration was a pronouncement of facts, not phrases.

In such a book as this there is no place for any of the many tedious discussions as to the tenets of the various sects found by the French in America; still less are we interested in the frequent disputes among them concerning these discussions. Brissot criticises Chastellux, Bayard attacks Brissot, etc., etc. But it does interest us, and greatly, too, to notice the deep impression made upon the Europeans by our system of absolute religious liberty, the large number of our sects (none of which predominated), our very un-European observance of the Sabbath, and our (to them) novel attitude toward churches and attendance upon them. Short as was the time which the French spent among us, it sufficed to impress them with the deep sincerity of religious feeling which, then, as always, ran and still runs through every class of our society. Mazzei boldly maintains that "among all these States there is none

where religious liberty is not on a better footing than in any part of Europe." Even before Brissot reached American shores he learned on board ship that "these sailors are very religious, as are all American sailors with whom I have since travelled"; and Bayard, after his fine phrase, "Americans have a robust confidence in the Lord," adds that "during moments of leisure, religion is a subject of conversation, but less for the purpose of criticising other sects than for confirming the belief of each speaker in his own. Sometimes, however, they treat members of sects other than their own rather stiffly." Says Beaujour: "Religion is not only necessary to a man in American social life, but even more so in private life. The Americans have acted wisely in admitting all religions alike and in excluding atheism alone." Mazzei notices that "the citizens who are not of some Christian religion are few in number." While travelling through Connecticut, Robin observes: "I never entered a house without finding a Bible there, which they read evenings and Sundays in the family."

"Throughout all of America," says La Rochefoucauld, "the great ambition of every new town is to build a church," and he shows how, even before they could afford a church, the people were ministered to by itinerant preachers: "There is not a religious edifice in this province [Maine]

elsewhere than in Belfast and Penobscot. Sundry famished ministers travel through the townships preaching a sermon or two, for which they are paid four dollars, and go on to preach elsewhere the following Sunday." Blanchard noted down that in and about Boston everybody drove to church, but that out in the country both young and old generally arrived on horseback; outside of one country church he counted over a hundred horses.

The scrupulous observance of the Sabbath, so different from the custom in Europe, caused many comments, not all of which are complimentary. Says Bayard: "Coming back from Church, I observed that all the house doors were closed. They remained so all day long. Everyone seemed to be in retirement. Mrs. Bush, as well as her daughters, withdrew after dinner to read several chapters of the Old and the New Testament. It is thus that in all the United States they keep Sunday." "You cannot go into a house," says Robin, "without finding everybody occupied in reading the Bible. It is a touching spectacle to see a father surrounded by his family expounding to them the sublime truths of the Sacred Book. No one fails to attend the church of his sect. Absolute silence is preserved there, as well as an order and respect which has not existed for a long time in most of our Catholic churches. The singing of the psalms is slow and majestic. The

harmony of the poetry in the national language increases the interest, and must contribute to hold the attention of the audience." Blanchard also found "the singing pleasant and well done, not by priests and salaried chaplains, but by men and women, young and old, assembled together by reason of a common desire to praise God." An equally pleasant picture of the interior of a church during service is painted by Crèvecœur: "Here on a Sunday one sees a congregation of respectable farmers and their wives, all clad in neat homespun, well mounted or riding in their own humble wagons. There is not a squire among them, saving only the unlettered magistrate. There is a parson as simple as his flock, and farmers who do not fatten on the labor of others."

But worldly as well as philosophical Chastellux would have us believe that we carried matters to an extreme: "They also agree in a practice which does not seem to me to have any necessary connection with the dogmas of protestantism,—I refer to the extreme severity with which they observe the Sabbath. That day is consecrated to divine worship, which is an excellent idea, but it is also consecrated to repose, and of what use is repose without gaiety, without diversion! I venture to say that in America you know nothing either of the strain of work or of the plea-

sure of repose. What a distressing silence reigns in your cities on Sunday! One would think that a violent epidemic—a pest, had obliged everybody to shut himself up at home." Then after describing the gayety of a European Sabbath, he adds: "In America it is entirely different. Nothing but laziness, no music or dancing, the sexes separated. As the women know of nothing else to do than make a toilette which has not already been shown at Meeting, they perforce drop into mere idleness, with no diversion but frivolous conversation and gossip, while the men, bored with having read the Bible to their children, assemble around a joyless bowl, at the bottom of which there is nothing but drunkenness." Michaux (the elder) complained that "they are so full of scruples in America, that on Sundays in the cities one dare not go out even to take a walk." It required so keen an observer as Marnézia to notice that "although the Sundays, so religiously, even scrupulously, observed in America, are for them holy days, they are not sad ones."

As to the interiors of our churches, it is but natural that the French should find them oversimple and lacking in decoration after the splendor of their own cathedrals. In Boston, Abbé Robin remarks that "there are nineteen churches of different sects, all clean and some very pretty,

especially those of the Presbyterians and the Anglicans. Their shape is a long quadrilateral, with a speaking desk, and furnished with uniform benches. All these churches are bare of ornament, and nothing appeals to the imagination or the heart, nor reminds a man of what he has come there to do, what he is, or what he is going to be. Neither painting nor sculpture recall those great events which stimulate his sense of duty. No pomp or ceremonies paint for him the greatness of the Being whom he adores, no processions suggest the homage owed to Him by whom nature is awakened, and by whom the fields are covered with harvests and the trees with fruit." Indeed, to such an extent is this simplicity carried that Brissot queries: "Can one properly give this name (church) to a room where there are only benches?—no ornament, painting, altar, chairs,—nothing, in a word, of all that one sees in the churches of other religions."

Notwithstanding this simplicity of the churches, both within and without, the effect which they produced upon our visitors was, says Brissot, very pleasant: "Nothing is more charming than the appearance of a church or meeting-house on a Sunday. A good suit is on the back of every man, cloth from India or England attires the women and children, without their being spoiled by those fallals or ornaments which ennui, fancy and bad

taste load upon our women." He adds: "Church service in America is merely a meeting of brothers who come there to shake hands, think and pray together." When he reaches Connecticut he becomes even more enthusiastic: "Weatherfields [*sic*] is remarkable for its elegant meeting-house or church. It is said to present an enchanting spectacle on Sunday because of the many young and pretty girls assembled there and for the agreeable music with which divine service is interspersed."

The only reference to a recognition of officialdom by the church is in St. Méry's statement that St. Paul's in New York "is equipped with benches, one of which is against the wall for members of Congress, and opposite to it is another one reserved for the Governor." The importance in the community of the minister of the gospel was remarked by Rochambeau: "The highest seat in all public banquets was reserved for the clergyman. He blessed the repast, but these prerogatives went no further than social intercourse."

Because of the stirring events then taking place, it was but natural that religious services should sometimes take on a political complexion. We learn from Lafayette that "the sermons also speak out on its [revolutionary cause's] behalf, for the Bible is often republican." Having advised an Anglican clergyman to talk of nothing but heaven while in the pulpit, Lafayette listened

on the following Sunday to "the disgraceful House of Hanover," which proved how little the preacher's patriotism coincided with the Frenchman's view of professional etiquette! Chastellux gives further testimony to the same effect: "Passing in front of the Meeting-House just at the hour of service, I had the curiosity to go in and remained a good half hour so as not to interrupt the preacher, and also to show respect to those assembled. There were not many people on account of the excessive cold weather, but I saw several pretty young ladies, very elegantly dressed. Mr. Barkminster, the young minister, spoke with much grace, and rather reasonably for a preacher. I especially noticed the adroit manner in which he brought politics into his sermon by comparing Christians bought by the blood of Jesus Christ but continually obliged to combat flesh and sin, —by comparing them, I say, with the thirteen United States which have acquired liberty and independence but are obliged to employ all their strength to combat a formidable power and to preserve the treasure which they have acquired." Notwithstanding the political nature of some of the sermons, we learn from Rochambeau that "owing to these precautions, religion did not at all enter into political deliberations." Beaujour agrees with him that "religion exercises small influence here. All strange sects are admitted."

As to the good feeling existing between men of different religious views and the lack of religious dissension, there are many quotations available; let us take one from Mandrillon: "That which is the most edifying and at the same time most singular in the conduct of all the sects which have peopled Pennsylvania is the spirit of concord which reigns among them in spite of the difference of their religious opinions. Although members of different churches, they love each other like children of the same father. They have always lived as brothers because they have enjoyed the liberty to think as men. It is to this precious harmony that one should especially attribute the rapid advance of the colony." The keen-sighted Mazzei is particularly struck by what an advantage it was to the United States that there was no State church, and also that no one religion dominated the others. It is equally clear to Ségur how valuable to the nation is this democracy of religion: "Besides, the multiplicity of sects makes tolerance indispensable among them and what would seem perhaps very singular is that the Catholics have set the example. No form of belief is dominant there, nor privileged. The ministers of each sect were paid by those who profess it, and they did not tolerate any objectionable jealousy (mother of discords), but instead there reigned a praiseworthy emulation in

charity and other virtues." "All religions," says Perrin du Lac, "are respected and regarded by the Government of the United States as the most inviolable private property of the individuals professing them." He counted fifty-three different sects, and says their number was constantly being increased. Beaujour holds that "there is no country in the world where there are so many religious sects as in the United States; there are fully sixty-three, but among them all (differing less in dogma and in morality than in rite and discipline) there are only two which deserve to be distinguished from the rest, because each possesses a particular physiognomy—the Quakers and the Unitarians." Robin finds in Boston nineteen churches of all sorts, St. Méry twelve churches of ten sects in Baltimore, and La Rochefoucauld five in Albany, all of different denominations. How these various cults are geographically divided seemed especially to interest Ségur, who notes that for religious reasons Dutchmen came to New England and New York, Swedes to New Jersey and Delaware, British Presbyterians to Boston, German Anabaptists and Irish Catholics to Pennsylvania, and French Protestants to the Carolinas.

Although several of the French writers criticise the Quakers for failing, because of religious scruples, to take an active part in the Revolution, it is only just to those worthy folk to report

a pleasing anecdote of Ségur's concerning them: "Quakers are very strict as far as they personally are concerned, but never did anyone push toleration further than they, and although war is in their eyes a great crime and they detest the military profession, still they know how to render just homage to warriors who are sparing of human blood and who combine virtue with bravery. One of the most renowned among them for his spirit came to see Rochambeau on his way through Philadelphia, and this is how he addressed him; —'my friend, yours is a villainous business, but they tell me that you carry it on with all the humanity possible. I am very glad of it, I am pleased to meet you, and I have come to pay my respects to prove my esteem for you.' "

CHAPTER XII

THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS: LAW, MEDICINE, ARCHITECTURE, ETC.

JEALOUS as were our American forefathers of all rank and titles, they nevertheless recognized the distinction due to education and brains, the possession of both of which has always been necessary for success in what are styled the learned professions. Even Crèvecœur, that champion of the farmer, cannot help admiring the superior education of our early lawyers, although he sounds a "wild alarum," which is of itself a great compliment to them and their ability: "The three principal classes of inhabitants are lawyers, planters, and merchants. This is the province which has yielded the first named their richest spoils, for nothing can exceed their wealth, their power, or their influence,—they have reached the ne plus ultra of worldly felicity. These men are rather law-givers than interpreters of the law, and have united here, as well as in most of the other provinces, the skill and dexterity of the scribe with the power and ambition of the prince. Who can tell where this may lead at some future day? In

another century the law will possess in the north what now in Peru and Mexico belongs to the church." But even he grudgingly admits that "in some provinces, where every inhabitant is constantly employed in cultivating and tilling the earth, they are the only men who have any knowledge. They are here what the clergy were in past centuries with you." Although he finds himself unable to deny that "lawyer and merchant are the fairest titles our town affords," he insists that "it is a pity that our forefathers, who happily abolished so many fatal customs and expunged from their new government so many errors and abuses, both religious and civil, did not prevent the introduction of a set of men so dangerous." In the same paragraph, however, his fair-mindedness forces him to admit of Nantucket that "only one single lawyer has of late years been able to support himself here. He is sometimes employed in recovering money lent or in preventing those events to which the contentious propensity of its inhabitants may sometimes expose them. He is seldom employed as a means of self-defense, and much seldomer for attack." St. Méry, whose sojourn in America was long enough to qualify him to judge us, agrees that "their most remarkable men are the lawyers," and adds "this profession is more lucrative than in England."

Some idea of whether or not the early American

lawyer was amassing undue hoards of wealth was learned by Chastellux from a youthful veteran of the Revolution: "I chatted also with Mr. Scotland, a young man who, although only twenty-six years old, has fought in three campaigns as a Captain of Artillery and is now a lawyer with already a good practice. It is a fact that in America it is the most respected and lucrative profession. He told me that for a simple consultation they paid him ordinarily four dollars, or even a half joe (42 livres of our money). Besides, after the action is commenced, they pay as much again for each writ or each deed, that is to say, for each step and for each written paper, for in America lawyers are both solicitors and notaries." Although Brissot finds that "the fees received by lawyers are much too high; they are, as in England, excessive," Chastellux speaks of a Mr. Smith who "was at the same time innkeeper and lawyer, and possesses a pretty library," showing either that the said Smith was an overgreedy accumulator of pelf or else, what is more likely, that it required something besides his receipts from the legal profession to support him! A pleasing combination—to adjust a man's legal difficulties and replenish his inner man all at the same time and without change of scene!

We have already observed that early society tended to stratify itself, and that lawyers gener-

ally enjoyed a high standing in the community, and by way of showing that other elements than an educated brain entered into it, there is a charming picture of a country lawyer from the pen of the Duc de La Rochefoucauld: "I stopped to dine at Bidderfort (Maine) at Mr. Thasteher's, a lawyer whom I had seen at the General's on their return from the Circuit Court of Penobscot. Mr. Thasteher is also a member of Congress; he lives two miles from town in a modest dwelling which the most insignificant lawyer of France would have considered beneath his dignity. Opposite his house and across the road is a hut twelve feet square, built of roughly joined planks. This hut, perched on rocks on the side of the road (for all this section is very rocky) is his office (both for business and consultation) and his library. The library is composed of two thousand volumes, all excellently chosen, not only upon professional subjects but also of history, customs, and literature. It is provided with everything new that appears in America, and he has sent him from England all works he considers important and which he cannot get in the United States. He reads widely and is well educated. Both in thought and manner he displays an original turn which is not displeasing because unaffected but which sometimes imparts to his generally eccentric ideas a certain exaggeration or even error.

Simple in his exterior, rigid even to severity in his principles, he is kindly, hospitable, obliging and respected in his neighborhood. His farm-house is never shut, his office is always open, for as he has never been robbed he thinks he should pay homage to the probity of his neighbors by this uncommon confidence. Mr. Thasteher complains that the establishment of good schools is not prompt enough in his district."

As to the conduct of lawyers after elevation to the bench, it is gratifying to find that even in the early days of our republic there was the same good report of them that there has always been. Our courts even then stood so high in public esteem, and have so well maintained those early traditions, that it is no wonder that our chief tribunal, the Supreme Court at Washington, is to-day generally regarded as the most admirable bench in the world. Mazzei says: "The manner of trying cases in America is pretty well known; it has received the approbation and praise of even Abbé de Mably himself." Why not accompany St. Méry into a court-room and see for ourselves with his eyes: "The Court of Justice was assembled there and we had the curiosity to go and see it in session. One could hardly speak of the court-room as impressive, but, when looking at the jury, it was impossible to refrain from admiring an order of things which leaves the decision of

cases to the very class of men who are in a position to know how they came about, and in whom the study of law has not supplanted the emotions of the human heart. Furthermore, no matter how simple the temple consecrated to Justice, it always arouses the respect of men devoted to it."

Turning from the profession of law to that of medicine, we find that the early American physicians shared with the lawyers their high standing in the community, just as they equally enjoyed confidential relations with it. Perhaps it is for the very reason that physicians and lawyers have always stood so high among us, that those two professions are, in America, recruited from a better class of society than they are abroad. Brissot makes it clear that there was no sordid inducement for an American to study medicine, for although he thought our lawyers overpaid, he complains: "But the doctors have not the same advantage in this respect as the lawyers." And he goes on to explain why the doctors did not earn so much as the lawyers: "The good health which is generally enjoyed here makes them less necessary, and yet they are pretty numerous. There are few maladies here, the air is healthy in spite of the nearness of the sea and the insular position of the city (New York); the inhabitants are pretty temperate. Men of means are not rich

enough to give themselves over to that luxury and debauchery which kill so many in Europe and there are no really poor people,—fish and meat being cheap." How discouraging was our good health to the medical profession also appears from Crèvecœur's account of Nantucket: "Singular as it may seem to you, there are but two medical practitioners on the Island—for what service can physic be in a primitive society where inebriation is so rare?" La Rochefoucauld tells us to what straits the medical profession of Maine was reduced: "The country is absolutely bare of surgeons, or at least of men who have sufficient knowledge to deserve the name. The inhabitants are not numerous nor rich enough to have good surgeons. This profession, always coupled with another more useful, becomes a secondary occupation, and is only practised by ignorant fellows who hardly know how to bleed you."

Chastellux is not the only one to comment upon how often American doctors were wise enough to recommend a change of air instead of plying their patients with drugs. As showing the appreciation abroad of the place enjoyed in the community by American physicians, and therefore how expedient it seemed to gain their favor, Crèvecœur, after the war, when he became French Consul in New York, issued a general notice, November 17, 1783, to all medical societies offering to fur-

nish them certain French medical journals at the expense of his king, which offer received a number of acceptances.

Passing from those professions which peculiarly need the intimate confidence of clients, to those in which relations are more commercial and formal, we find that engineering, as a profession, was as yet so much in embryo as to excite but little comment from the French. General Washington's skill as a surveyor was generally remarked by them, but that was rather because everything that had to do with him seemed to exert a fascination upon the foreigners, a contemporary effect which goes far to justify his place in our hearts to-day. Surveying when it touched Washington interested them, but not otherwise. Our great public works which were to develop a power rendering us the only nation in the world capable of constructing the Panama Canal, were as yet only possibilities of the dim future. The Frenchmen, of course, wrote only of what they could see, and although there was but little of engineering results for them to describe, they do tell us much of our early architecture, whose tendencies were even then remarked as typically American.

Says Crèvecœur: "An European on his arrival must be greatly surprised to see the elegance of their houses, their sumptuous furniture, as well as

the magnificence of their tables,—can he imagine himself in a country, the establishment of which is of so recent a date?" Let us see just how all this actually did strike such an arriving European, in the person of Abbé Robin, the observant chaplain of Rochambeau's army: "From this harbor full of pleasant islands we see among the trees on the western shore a magnificent perspective of houses in an amphitheatre, stretching round in a half circle for more than half a league,—that is Boston. These high, regular buildings, interspersed with clock-towers, strike us less as a modern colony than an ancient city, embellished and peopled by commerce and the arts. . . This street is adorned with fine houses, for the most part two or three stories high. The construction of the houses is surprising to European eyes. They are entirely of wood, not built in the heavy and sombre fashion of our ancient towns but regularly and well-lighted. The carpenter-work is neat and well done, and the outsides are of smooth planks, clapboarded one above another like the tiles on our roofs; they are painted grey, adding greatly to the pleasing appearance. The roofs are ornamented with balustrades, doubtless because of fires. The houses are built on foundations consisting of a wall about a foot high:—one sees at a glance how much healthier these houses must be than ours. All the parts are solidly interlocked

and their weight is so trifling in comparison with their bulk that the houses can be moved about. I saw one of two stories which had been transported at least an eighth of a league. The entire French army witnessed a similar feat at Newport. What we hear of the travelling houses of the Scythians is far less marvellous." Mandrillon characterizes Boston's buildings both public and private as "magnificent." He also says of Charleston, South Carolina, that it had "some public buildings which would pass for handsome even in Europe." Another arriving European, this time the Comte de Ségur, remarks of Dover, Delaware, one of the first towns he encounters: "All the houses of Dover present simple but elegant shapes. They are built of wood, and painted different colors. This variety in building, the cleanliness that reigns in them, the highly polished bronze door-knockers, all announce the order, activity, intelligence and prosperity of the inhabitants." Beaujour takes an opposite view and snubs us severely: "Their civil architecture is as yet unformed, and their style in construction is as petty as their custom of building in parallel lines is tiresome. All the cities, moreover, are built of brick or painted boards, and if one excepts certain edifices used for public banks, nothing could be more trivial than their architecture. It is Dutch wedded to Chinese, if one can apply such

names to this grotesque style." By the time Brissot arrived this Dutch tendency in our architecture was being modified: "Elegant buildings in the English style are replacing the houses with Dutch pointed gables. There are a few still to be found in the old style and they are pleasing to an European observer for they remind him of the origin of this colony." St. Méry says the houses are built by day labor, and especially notices that in the cities the cellar doors are allowed to encroach upon the sidewalks. Mandrillon finds that "the houses of New York, built of brick and roofed with tiles, are more comfortable than elegant," but Crèvecœur holds that they reveal "a union of Dutch neatness with English taste and architecture." Although but little is said of large rooms and halls devoted to public entertainments, it is natural that the following reference to a Boston ballroom should be found in the pages of Chastellux, the pet of society: "It is superb, beautiful in its architecture, well decorated and lighted." De Broglie found no architecture in Philadelphia admirable except the prison, and Chateaubriand thought the uninterrupted level of the housetops very monotonous!

Turning to humbler and more prosaic surroundings, we learn from Brissot that "the shops in the country are always apart from the houses. This proves a taste for cleanliness and also their

respect both for home life and their women, because the men who come to purchase have, thanks to this arrangement, nothing to do with them." Most of the remarks upon architecture treat of country houses, and St. Méry elucidates for us the manner in which those buildings gradually improve with the circumstances of the owner: "On the highway between Philadelphia and New York the settlers built first a log cabin, after a while a wooden house of boards, and still later on a mansion often of stone,—at which time they employed the wooden house as a kitchen and the log cabin as a stable." That these country houses were constantly increasing in number is clear from Robin's observation that "there are no longer, as in Connecticut, only an occasional house along the road just large enough to lodge one family, and furnished with what is barely necessary; here in Maryland there are spacious homes isolated from each other, made up of different buildings surrounded by plantations; their furniture is of costly woods and rare marbles, adorned by skillful artists." In Connecticut he comments again upon the ample proportions characteristic of our architecture: "Their houses are spacious, clean, well-aired, built of wood, possessing every comfort. I found in all of them indications of their industrious and inventive genius." This same comfortable feature impresses La Rochefoucauld dur-

ing his visit to General Knox's country place: "The houses are built near together, but out of a hundred visible from the General's house there are hardly half a dozen log-houses. His own house is a fine one without being magnificent, well-furnished but not luxurious, commodious enough to lodge comfortably a large family which may still increase, and also to entertain seven or eight friends."

St. Méry notices how our architecture is adapted to local conditions: "In Norfolk, Virginia, the houses are built with a central hall running through them, which provides a living room for warm weather." Bayard also mentions the feeling of comfort which American houses seemed to inspire in the French: "On a sloping hillside you observe beside the road a white house with green blinds,—it belongs to Mr. Smith. There are two rooms below and the same number of bed-chambers on the first floor. The door is in the middle. Between the parlors runs a wide corridor, open at both ends, to provide a current of air during the excessive heat of the dog-days. The kitchen is separated from the house by a covered passage. One might describe the parlors as handsomely furnished because the walls are covered with pretty paper." Blanchard also notices that "they make use of paper to cover their walls instead of tapestry and have some very pretty ones." Bris-

State-house, Philadelphia, 1778.

From an old print in the collection of Charles A. Munn.

sot saw "some pretty wall paper" at Mr. Overleaf's inn at Portsmouth.

The luxurious Chastellux was not so easily satisfied with his lodgings in a Virginia country-house as the rest of his countrymen might have been: "Their houses are spacious and well furnished, but the bedrooms are not comfortable. They don't mind putting three or four people in the same room, who are not disturbed by being so crowded, because, not feeling the need for writing and reading, all they require indoors is a bedchamber, a dining-room and a drawing-room. The chief magnificence of the Virginians consists of furniture, linen, and table silver, so that they resemble our ancestors who had neither cabinets nor wardrobes in their châteaux, but only well-stocked wine cellars and good sideboards."

It remains for that charming courtier, the Comte de Ségur, to fittingly conclude these observations upon our early architecture, by an inspiring sentence anent Philadelphia: "It is hardly the architecture of this city's edifices, but rather the great memories, which attract one's interest to them and command one's respect. The entire city is a noble temple erected to tolerance."

CHAPTER XIII

LABOR, MANUFACTURE, MERCHANT MARINE, AND FOREIGN TRADE

That an enterprising spirit early characterized American business, and also that it received wide recognition abroad, appears from the following narrative: "A young man with no capital at all was undecided as to what he should do. He selected from English newspapers the names of five commercial houses, and wrote to each of them to see if he could find one which would give him credit. To his great surprise, all five cargoes came to him at the same time." Interesting as is this early appreciation by foreigners of the alert progressiveness of American business men, it is not so significant to our national well-being as their chorus of approving comments upon the dignity of labor in our new republic. It is a most welcome coincidence that foreigners should remark at the close of the eighteenth century, just as they are accustomed to do to-day, that labor was better paid and lived better in our country than in Europe. It has always been our good

fortune that facts should warrant this observation—may they never cease to do so! Nor was the reason far to seek—to labor was respectable.

Ségur, one of those especially struck with the dignity of labor in our land, says: "There, no useful occupation is ridiculed or despised, and amid unequal conditions all preserve the same rights. Idleness alone is shameful. Military rank, etc., does not prevent anyone from engaging in a private profession. Everybody is a merchant, farmer or artisan. The less well-to-do are domestics, workmen, or sailors; far from resembling men of the lower classes in Europe, here they fully deserve the respect accorded them, and which their seemly air and conduct demands." More than by anything else was Crèvecœur struck by the respect we accorded to honest toil: "Everyone in the town of Nantucket follows some occupation with diligence but without that servility which prevails in Europe. The mechanic seemed to be descended from as good parentage, was as well dressed and fed, and held in as much esteem as his employer." A few years later on Beaujour observed the same state of affairs: "It must be remarked that the poorest individual, the ordinary day laborer, is better fed and clad here than in any other country. Add to this that here one never sees a man in rags, and that the poorest workman is always cleanly clad." Brissot fully

appreciates that the better scale of living enjoyed by the American workman than by his European brother, had a most important bearing upon the welfare of our people: "It is not rare to see in the United States a carter driving his cart and eating a turkey wing and some white bread. I have seen a vessel arrive in New York from Europe loaded with Scotchmen; the next day there was not one who was not hired out and busy." He also draws a comparison between the wages paid here and abroad: "The current rate for black servants in Philadelphia is four to five dollars per month, not including food. You see that these wages are much higher than that of servants in our country districts, and even in our large cities, where the best paid do not get more than two hundred livres."

Clearly as they grasped our spirit of enterprise in commerce, and our higher regard for a life of toil than for one of leisure, the Europeans seemed unable to understand how ready were the Americans to divert their efforts into any new channel which was either more profitable or temporarily necessary: "Because the land [Massachusetts], lacking fertility, yielded but a modest return, they turned to fishing and navigation and now they are fishermen and sailors." It always surprised the French to find retired American officers keeping inns, nor could they explain how General

Knox, a former bookseller, could almost at once become an excellent artillery commander. Although they found our enterprise and respect for work typical yet understandable, they continued to evince surprise at our adaptability and versatility. No class of our people was a greater beneficiary from this spirit of commercial enterprise than that termed "labor," because its high wages and better scale of living constantly benefited from the employment demand caused by American enterprise.

From two serious labor evils then existing we have fortunately since been freed, namely, slavery and the use of indentured servants and apprentices—which latter practice was carried to such extremes as to justify Beaujour's criticism that while in the South, one-third of the population consisted of black slaves, in the North, a quarter of the entire youth, white as well as black, were bound by apprenticeship contracts. In the remarks which Brissot makes upon the latter unfortunate practice, he points out the superior efficiency of free, or unindentured labor; "Laborers are rare and they are dear. However, I don't know but that the lower wages paid indentured servants (offset as they are by the lesser efficiency of these apprentices) are after all less advantageous to the employer than the higher wages of free labor." Roux also decided that apprenticed

labor cost more than that of free men, because of the loss of time teaching apprentices to work, their doctor's bills, and their ship-money due to the ship captains who brought them over. Perrin du Lac tells us that "this business [of providing indentured servants] is one of the most important in the United States. A ship captain arrives in Ireland or in some Hanseatic village. He announces that he will take back a number of passengers . . . those who cannot pay their passage money treat with him for it. He provides their food during the voyage, and on arrival sells their labor for an agreed sum. The duration of their slavery never exceeds two years for a bachelor nor four for a man of family. When the time has expired they are free, and become citizens."

Although in the early colonial days it was frequently difficult for newcomers to acquire landholdings, this gradually corrected itself, and Rochambeau shows how easy it was by the time he got here for laborers to become landowners: "Because there is much more land to clear than there are hands for the work, laborers are much sought after. The ordinary manual or day-laborer was paid in my time a piastre or five livres, —ten sous per day. Usually after working steadily for six years he has earned enough to buy a piece of land."

It was considered a matter for congratulation

that the farmers expended much more labor and thought upon the farm than upon the dwelling-house; says Chastellux: "Near Rockaway, I was astonished at the degree of perfection to which agriculture is carried. Throughout all this State the manor-house is very simple and small; the farm buildings alone are lofty and spacious. Faithful to national economy, they sow, reap and sell without enlarging their houses and expenditures, content to live in the corner of their farms, and to be mere witnesses of their own wealth." Mandrillon, in his detailed account of the condition of affairs in each of the States, ranks South Carolina at the head of them all in the matter of cultivation: "The country is well settled,—there are few districts in Europe where civilization and agriculture reach so high a degree of perfection."

After this consideration of the lot of labor, that potent factor in the welfare of a nation, let us learn what the French thought of its employment in manufacture,—the new field in which we were later to prove so successful. Says Bayard, by way of looking into the future: "Americans will surely perfect the machines which assist the mechanical arts because hand labor will be very dear there for several centuries. Their mills are superior to those of Europe." He was evidently better informed than Gérard, the French Minister, who in 1778 wrote home to Vergennes, the Min-

ister of Foreign Affairs, that "all the colonists of English extraction, except those of New England, are alien by character and custom alike to this sort of work [manufacturing]." In this connection he also pointed out that "labor, always dearer in America than in England, has become even more so by depopulation caused by the war, by men gone off to the army, and for the three hundred privateering ships, and also by the failure to import men to fill their vacancies." De Kalb early noted the feeling among Americans that they should not confine themselves to agriculture and fishing, but should invade the field of manufacturing, and he reports to the French government certain patriotic efforts being made to that end: "There has just been formed in Boston a company of rich men willing to make large advances for the encouragement of all sorts of manufactures." And several years later, Brissot notices the same admirable plan in operation: "They have formed a company to assist and encourage manufactures and business. These companies are in general composed of merchants, farmers, and the principal agents of the government; each contributes his knowledge and a small sum of money. In these companies they are not seeking ideals alone but rather utility and real profit." He also says: "Two things are very much the rage now among the Americans, viz.:

emigration to the west and manufacturing. On this last point Massachusetts seeks to rival Connecticut and Pennsylvania."

All the French felt that we should strive to become independent of foreign factories, and Mandrillon goes into discriminating detail in his advice upon the subject: "But in regard to manufactures, a different course of conduct should be followed. Instead of giving general encouragement to the exercise of all the arts as in Great Britain, they should choose with sagacity and precaution certain objects for the success of which they can reasonably hope and this choice should be of articles of prime necessity or those at least without which it is difficult to get along." How prone our own people were to continue in agricultural pursuits, and to depend upon newly arrived foreigners to meet our manufacturing needs appears from a report of February 28, 1795, sent by Minister Fauchet and his fellow Commissioners to the French government: "It is an incontestable fact that America owes what few manufactures it possesses to emigrants from Europe. The latest revolutions in Geneva are going to give it (America) clockmaking, something which does not exist here. Five or six hundred Geneva artisans and capitalists driven from their own country have united to erect an establishment on the North River in New York State. The land

is actually bought and the preliminary arrangements completed."

Mazzei comments on our backwardness in the matter of manufactured products: "We have already remarked the reasons why manufactures have not been able, and will not for a long time be able, to establish themselves in the United States, at least in those parts which can easily trade with Europe. The only objects which they make in America, especially in the interior for the use of those who live there, are of such heavy merchandise as cannot stand the increase of price occasioned by freight and other expenses."

Brissot has the clearest vision of all as to our future manufacturing triumphs: "You will see the American opening new markets and locating in his fatherland those British manufactures which England had reserved for herself, and by this readjustment of industrial procedure reverse the balance of trade that used to be against America." How well this new movement was already succeeding in 1778 appears from Brissot's statement in that year: "If any table of statistics can give you an idea of the prosperity towards which these confederated commonwealths are hastening, it is that of their exportations, which are constantly on the increase. It is difficult even to enumerate all the manufactured articles which the Americans now export and of which almost one half were until recently

unknown to them." As illustrating the interest which all Americans were then taking in our new manufacturing ventures, the postscript of a letter written by Washington to Lafayette, dated New York, October 11, 1790, is in point: "I send you a pair of shoe-buckles, not for the value of the present but as a remembrance, and as a sample of a manufactured article of this city." A few years later Beaujour comments: "Industrial manufacturing which for a long time remained stationary in the United States, has recently made rapid progress." He also comments in an illuminating manner on the status of manufacturing as seen by him at the beginning of the new century: "No prohibitive system,—no monopoly, hampers business in this country, and when one thinks of the prohibitions and monopolies which interfere with it in others, it is surprising that manufactures have not made even more progress here; but besides the lack of training which everywhere retards the progress of the arts, that which particularly must retard it in the United States is the dearness of hand labor. In France, the average price of work by the day is two francs in towns and one and a half in the country; here, it is one dollar in the towns and three-quarters of a dollar in the country, and, as the dollar is worth five and a quarter francs, you see that labor is three times dearer here than in France. The high

price of labor is therefore the principal cause which retards the progress of manufacturing in the United States, and Americans will not be able to equal Europeans until, following the English custom, they shall have supplemented by numerous machines the high price of hand labor. They have not as yet come to manufacture half of what they consume and, in view of all they buy abroad, one would think that they were still only a European colony."

That acute observer Brissot gives us credit for intelligent specializing in our efforts: "But there is almost no part of the United States where they do not have very fine mills for corn or to saw wood into planks. The northern States also have them for making iron. It is especially in the construction of mills that the Americans are distinguished, either for diversifying their use or for building and distributing them." This reference to specializing in commerce causes us to turn back to one of the proudest pages in our history—our former world-wide pre-eminence in constructing ships, which resulted in a splendid merchant marine, and which put into American pockets the sumptuous profits of a great ocean-carrying trade which we now apathetically permit to go abroad, while our merchant flags decorate museums or dangle from the sterns of coastwise shipping! The writer remembers that during the two years he spent in

Buenos Aires, only one merchant ship bearing the American flag came to that crowded port. In the year 1911, no merchant vessel carrying the American flag entered the ports of London, of Havre, or Marseilles!

But let us turn back to a pleasanter picture. Beaujour tells us that "the most important branch of American industry is the construction of ships. The Americans excel in naval architecture, and on this point they rival the most industrious peoples of Europe. The finest ships come from the dockyards of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York, but the best of all are those built of wood from the Carolinas in the southern ports. They estimate the annual tonnage of vessels constructed in the different shipyards at near one hundred thousand tons." Abbé Robin speaks as decidedly as do all the others on this subject: "Their shipyards, established in all their ports, have made them the rivals of the best constructors of the old world. The commerce of Boston furnished to Great Britain masts and yards for the Royal Navy. The Americans constructed on commission or for their own account a large number of merchant ships renowned for the superiority of their sailing powers. They are so lightly built that one does not need to be a connoisseur to distinguish them from the ships of all other nations." Pontgibaud remarks: "I found a fine looking three-master for they en-

joyed, and justly, the reputation of being very good shipbuilders." And St. Méry, who came to America in one of our vessels, testifies that "American ships are solidly built, are very clean and well furnished,—a good deal of mahogany being used." How widely this superiority was recognized abroad appears from Brissot's remark that "the Dutch houses which trade with America have given up using Dutch ships, which, much heavier than American ones, require a longer time for the trip. . . . I have since learned that this ship made another voyage to Marseilles and was sold there to a French house. This sale of American constructed ships is a branch of industry which will some day expand and become very advantageous to the Americans who both construct vessels and sell them." He quotes Lord Sheffield as saying that the building of ships, either for sale or hire, is a very considerable branch of commerce with the Americans. De Kalb in a report to the French Government, says: "I am constantly astonished at the great number of merchant vessels which I see in the harbors, rivers, and bays, all the way from the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay in Virginia as far up as Boston. I find everywhere a great deal of work going on in the shipyards." Perrin du Lac predicted that our "shipbuilding will, for a long time, prove a source of riches and prosperity;"—alas, that the period should have ended.

Mandrillon explains how the greatest possible profit was skilfully drawn from this industry: "The construction of ships is considerable in this province of New England; they send them to the West Indies loaded with all sorts of cargoes which are sold there in exchange for the produce of those islands, which they thereupon carry to Great Britain, where both vessels and cargo are sold, and then they send back from there sail cloth and other articles to complete the equipment of other ships already under construction in their yards."

So successful did we become in ship-building that both the French and the English governments, fearing competition, spread the rumor abroad that our wood was so poor that ships constructed of it were of but short life. Fortunately for us who are seeking the facts so many years after, we find that even abroad there arose a chorus of denials of this mercantile fairy-tale. Brissot says: "The bad material which is alleged against American vessels is a fable. The art of constructing vessels has made more rapid progress in America than anywhere else. . . . Boston has produced some astonishing naval constructors. Having long and strenuously studied to combine swiftness with strength in vessels, Mr. Peck had achieved the greatest success. It was from his hands that there came the 'Bélisaire,' the 'Hazard' and the 'Rattlesnake,' all so brilliantly distinguished for their speed during the last war. The bows constructed

by this clever architect have qualities which others lack; they carry a quarter more and sail much more swiftly. The English themselves recognize the superiority of American construction. The Americans say to have a perfect vessel you must have a Boston keel and Philadelphia sides." He feels so strongly on this subject that he devotes an entire chapter to his argument for American ships: "I have seen in this port one of those packet-boats intended for the service between France and the United States. This ship, the 'Maréchal de Castries,' was built in America and has the reputation of being an excellent sailer; she is the best reply to the stories emanating from the Navy Department in Versailles against the value of American timber and the quality of their construction." In this connection it is interesting to record that the French government thought sufficiently well of our trees to send Michaux, the elder, to America to collect and send home, for plantation at Rambouillet, such trees as he thought would grow in France. During his first year here he sent home over six thousand seedling trees.

The flourishing condition of American shipbuilding and its resultant product—a strong merchant marine—were together most helpful to all American industries needing foreign markets for their wares. Indeed, without the aid of this shipping, no markets at all would have existed for

many of our products, as Beaujour clearly points out: "Having nothing to exchange among themselves but their agricultural produce, their domestic commerce is practically restricted to that along the coast. They have almost none in the interior because there are only a few macadamized roads and an even smaller number of navigable canals, but the rivers, most of which are tidal very far up, assist interior navigation and also the small boat traffic which employs annually three hundred thousand tons and twenty thousand sailors. . . . Foreign trade is, therefore, the most important business for Americans who, having superseded the Dutch in the ocean-carrying trade, have likewise developed their commerce far out of proportion to other nations." He adds valuable observations on the profits of the carrying trade. The more he investigates this interesting subject, the more is he amazed at the sudden rise and spread of our foreign trade: "The commercial avidity of the Americans equals and even surpasses the English. These people have hardly appeared upon the ocean and yet already there is not a shore on the globe nor a sea that their navigators have not explored." Talleyrand, too, noticed how promptly our enterprising ancestors seized upon new opportunities: "In 1794 I witnessed the return of the first American expedition which had gone to Bengal. The shippers made

immense profits, and the very next year fourteen American vessels set sail for India from different ports to dispute with the English the rich profits of that trade." Of the remarkable enterprise displayed by this infant among the nations, no testimony is more convincing than that of La Rochefoucauld: "Boston trades with the entire universe. This trait of enterprise in navigation, credited to Americans in general, seems in particular to belong to New England. Although the commerce of a great number of Massachusetts ports to the north and the south of Boston has for several years considerably increased, I hear that the commerce of that city, far from having suffered thereby, has itself increased for several years and has never been in a more flourishing state." "There is no jealousy," says Hilliard d'Auberteuil, "existing between Boston, New York, Charleston, and Philadelphia—only a useful rivalry." Nor was Boston the only point in New England which was gaining, for La Rochefoucauld tells us of Salem that its population, "which increases yearly, is today ten thousand. In commerce this city holds the sixth rank in America, and the second in Massachusetts. The peculiar activity and enterprising genius of its inhabitants suffice to explain the extent and progress of this commerce."

In view of the present great awakening of interest in our relations with South America, it is timely

to note that way back in 1787 Soulès prophesied that, "when you finally become obliged to have recourse to foreign trade, Spanish America will offer you a fine outlet for your products." His plan, however, was to exchange our goods for the output of their gold mines, not dreaming that the fertile plains of Argentina would some day outstrip mines in productive possibilities. Of all the references to how widely our merchants and shippers then pushed their trade, none is more enlightening than La Rochefoucauld's, that "the purpose of the vessels which go to the west coast of North America is to buy sealskins there, which they exchange in Canton for Chinese merchandise to be brought back to America, and either used there or exported to Europe. . . . The ordinary length of this trip from Boston of ships from ninety to two hundred and fifty tons is sixteen or eighteen months. The profit is three hundred per cent." The profits of the ocean-carrying trade are constantly growing greater but we allow them to slip into foreign pockets. In view of the pitifully low ebb to which our statesmen have permitted our merchant marine to fall, it is pathetic to read Hilliard d'Auberteuil's prediction: "They will without doubt become the greatest sailors in the universe, and the sovereigns of the ocean." We all want to get back to some such laws as were put on our statute books in 1789 by Washington,

Madison, and Jefferson, at a time when our ships carried but twenty-three per cent of our exports and imports, and which laws by 1800 had already raised that percentage to eighty-nine per cent, and by 1810 to ninety-one and one-half per cent, at the same time giving us a merchant marine that won for us the War of 1812. In 1828, when we were carrying eighty-nine per cent of our trade, the agricultural South and West, raising the cry of subsidies, combined against the shipping interests of New England and passed the Reciprocity Act of 1828, opening our trade to foreign competition, whereupon there at once began a loss which by now has shrunk our total down to a paltry and shameful eight per cent.

This brief sketch of the well-paid labor, the infant manufacturing industries, and the already vigorous foreign trade of three million Americans as the eighteenth century ended, makes a strange contrast to the huge proportions of those three elements attained by a hundred million of us, their descendants to-day. Given a persistence of the national traits which have achieved these results, it makes one's brain reel to think of what our children's children will witness and enjoy!

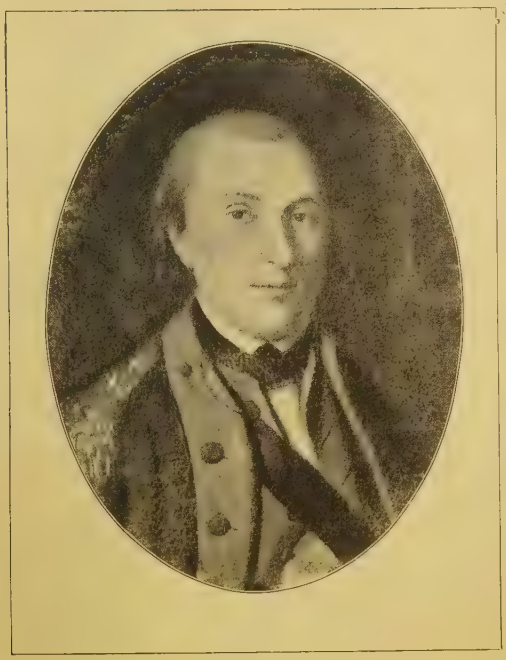
CHAPTER XIV

THE ALLIED ARMIES

Although this book concerns itself only with the customs and manners of the people, there needs but a brief study of the American army to justify the inclusion of this chapter. Our Continental army was little else than a temporary banding together of citizens, which, its purpose achieved, promptly dissolved into the original elements. Their social habits while soldiering were in no wise altered by that temporary condition, nor did they take back into private life anything of what a European understood by the phrase "soldierly habits." They were citizens, first, last, and all the time, both "the man behind the gun," and "the man with the hoe." Reason being thus shown for a chapter on the American army, our readers would, we feel sure, be rightfully disappointed if nothing were said about the splendid French troops to which we owe so much. Besides, it would be a pity to neglect the opportunity to contrast the two forces, so united in spirit, so widely different in appearance.

In speaking of the allied forces it is, of course,

to the French troops that we must first address ourselves. The most conspicuous feature of many which struck the undisciplined American was the remarkable discipline of the French; indeed, so striking was it that even the French themselves admitted that it was unusual, and mentioned it with justifiable pride. Lafayette wrote to Vergennes, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, January 30, 1781: "The admirable discipline of the French forces, besides the honor it did to Rochambeau and his officers, fulfilled an even more interesting purpose since it gave the American people the best possible impression of our nation." We can imagine the satisfaction with which that same gallant young officer must have reported to his adored Washington, that "the French discipline is such that chickens and pigs promenade among the tents without anyone bothering them, and inside their camp there is a field of corn, not a stalk of which has been touched." "The deputations of Indians that visited our camp," says Rochambeau, "could not get over their astonishment at seeing apple-trees still loaded with apples although just above tents which our soldiers had occupied for three months." The French army marched the entire length of America in the best of order and discipline, says the Duc de Lauzun, "a prodigy of which neither the English nor the American army furnished an exam-



Lafayette.

From a portrait painted by C W. Peale, in 1780, for Washington.

ple." Count Fersen wrote his father from Newport: "We have not yet had a single complaint against the troops; such discipline is admirable and astonishes the inhabitants." Even the modesty of Rochambeau did not prevent him from saying that "one may adduce as a proof of the incredible discipline of this army that during three entire campaigns there has not been a sword-thrust nor a quarrel between a single French soldier and an American one," and adds that "the discipline of the French army has been maintained in all its campaigns. This is due to the zeal of the Generals, the other officers, and certain individuals, and especially to the fine spirit which animated the soldiers, which has never once been at fault." Chastellux concurs in crediting the example of the officers with the admirable discipline of their men: "The courage of the Marquis de Vaudreuil, the good breeding which he exemplified, as well as the simplicity and kindliness of his ways,—an example followed by the officers of his squadron—have, even more than was hoped, captivated the hearts of the people who, although they were pronounced enemies of the English, had not until that time been friends with the French. I have heard it said a hundred times in Boston that even during the most perfect accord with London, never had an English man-of-war anchored in this port without vio-

lent quarrels between the people and the sailors, whilst the French squadron had spent three months there without the slightest dispute arising. Our navy officers were received everywhere not only as allies but as brothers." Chevalier de la Luzerne, the popular French Minister, in writing to his government, gives a pleasing picture of this spirit of confraternity: "The people of the States through which our divisions passed flocked from all sides to see them, the regimental bands played in the evening wherever the troops camped, while the inhabitants mixed freely with the officers and soldiers, almost every march terminating with a dance." So careful a commander as Rochambeau did not fail to appreciate the results effected by his officers' efforts: "Each soldier was reduced to four ounces of bread, some rice, and some meat, but endured these little discomforts with the same spirit for which most of his officers had set the example when they marched the whole of this terrible trip on foot at the head of their troops." Nor was this journey a holiday junket, says Robin; "a march of two hundred and fifteen miles during excessive heat through a country almost without supplies, where the soldier often lacked bread and was obliged to carry several days' provisions, had, nevertheless, caused less illness than in French garrison towns. The care taken by the officers had, it is true, contributed

greatly to this, by not permitting the soldiers to drink water without some rum in it to take away its unhealthy nature. Comte Saint-Maine sent ahead at each halt and each encampment to buy barrels of cider, which he distributed to his command at a very low price. This example followed at once by other corps, produced a most advantageous effect."

As showing how astute was the French commanding officer, let us hear how the resourceful Rochambeau handled some indiscreet insubordination on the part of that delightful raconteur (but doubtless trying subordinate) Chastellux: "But what deceived the English generals the most completely was a letter which the Chevalier de Chastellux wrote confidentially to the French Minister, in which he boasted of having been so skilful as to persuade me to conform my opinion to General Washington's, that the siege of New York Island was finally decided, and that our two armies were going to unite before that place, and that de Grasse would be written to come with his fleet and force the Bar of Sandy Hoock and the entrance to New York Harbor. He complained bitterly and in very unpleasant terms of how little effect a man of spirit could have upon the imperious character of a general who always wished to have his way! The English secret service officer sent me a copy of this intercepted letter; it was

certainly not with the design of establishing peace in my household. I summoned the Chevalier de 'Chastel*lus*' and showing him this letter threw it into the fire and left him a prey to remorse. You can judge that I did not attempt to undeceive him, and you will see in these memoirs just how far he enjoyed the confidence of the real project which I proposed to the Comte de Grasse."

Relying on the tried discipline of the French army, Lafayette, by his timely advice to his own government, eliminated the possibility of friction between the two armies, thus contributing vastly to their joint effectiveness: "The French Lieutenant-General was under the orders of Washington just like the American Major-Generals, for Lafayette, requesting troops to be sent, took pains to stipulate in the most positive manner that they should be entirely under Washington's orders. The Americans had the right of line. An American officer of equal grade and date ranked a French officer." Think of it! The officers of a trained body of splendid professional soldiers, gracefully yielding precedence to the amateur officers of a raw and constantly fluctuating militia! Can military history show a more admirable incident? The only adverse comments upon French discipline are a few from the Comte de Revel, and they only have to do with their troops landed for a month's siege operations before Yorktown.

He admits that they "marauded a little, and one could hardly blame them, because several detachments as well as ours had been tricked by their purchasing agents, and had only lard and spoiled biscuit." Let us hope that he was misinformed when he tells us that "as soon as the town surrendered the wind became more favorable and Monsieur de Mastelli, commanding two vessels, entered the anchorage. His comrades reproached him with having appropriated all the bells of the ships anchored in the river, and besides, many others indulged in pillage. A great many negroes were taken away and sold on our return in our colonies. The entire corps indulged in this unseemly behavior, and after pocketing the proceeds, secretly mocked the more scrupulous."

There has undoubtedly never in modern times been such a contrast between two bodies of troops acting in concert as that between the brilliant French and the ragged Americans. We must disabuse our minds of the notion gotten from picture-books that the Americans were attired in Continental buff-and-blue, because we shall find that the only distinctively American uniform was rags. Balch says that when the French troops first reached the Hudson River, after their march from Newport, "General Washington reviewed the two armies at White Plains. The American Army, which he inspected first, was composed of

four thousand five hundred men at the most, among whom were many boys ('some even of 12 and 13 years of age!' says Blanchard) and negroes. They had no uniforms and seemed badly equipped. In this respect they made a great contrast to the French army, with whom General Washington seemed very satisfied. The Rhode Island regiment alone appeared to the French officers well set up." Chastellux speaks of meeting some of this same regiment at Hartford the next year: "On crossing the ferry I met a Dutchman of the Rhode Island regiment. It is the same body that we had with us last year, but since then it has been recruited and clothed. The greater part of the soldiers are negroes or mulattoes, but they are strong and robust men, and those which I have seen make an excellent appearance." Baron Closen admires "the American troops,—children, blacks, and all," and Robin says: "In some regiments they have companies of negroes but always commanded by a white man." It is clear from these three testimonies that our colored compatriots fought as gallantly for their country in those early days as they did in the Spanish War at San Juan Hill and the Caney Blockhouse, or when they made up a fourth part of Commodore Perry's heroes on Lake Erie! They certainly cut a far nobler figure in our history than did the Tory families of our seaboard cities, who, now as

then, would be horrified to hear that those colored patriots have more right to our respect and gratitude than some of those so-called "Oldest Families!"

Lafayette's description of the difference between the English and American troops affords only one of the many proofs of how he took to heart anything touching the American cause: "In New York City, a numerous English garrison lived sumptuously whilst a few hundred Americans, badly clothed and badly fed, wandered about on the banks of the Hudson. Newly recruited from Europe and abundantly furnished with everything, the English Army in Philadelphia consisted of about eight thousand men; that of Valley Forge was reduced to five thousand. The unfortunate soldiers lacked coats, hats, shirts, shoes —everything. Their feet and legs turned black from the frost and often had to be amputated. Lacking money, they had neither food nor means for transporting it. For whole days together rations were lacking to the Army, and the patient virtue of the officers and soldiers was a continuing miracle, renewed every instant." "The men are without coats, shoes or arms," wrote Fersen to his father. Pontgibaud also paints a pitiful picture of the American troops during the dreadful winter at Valley Forge: "Soon I came in sight of the camp. My imagination had pictured an

army with uniforms, the glitter of arms, standards, etc.,—in short, military pomp of all sorts. Instead of the imposing spectacle thus anticipated, I saw grouped together or alone, a few militiamen, poorly clad and for the most part without shoes, many of them badly armed but supplied with provisions, and I noticed that tea and sugar formed part of their rations. In passing through the camp I also remarked soldiers with cotton night-caps under their hats and some wearing, instead of cloaks or great-coats, coarse woollen blankets exactly like those provided for the patients in our French hospitals;—I learned later that these were the officers and generals. Such, in strict truth, was, at the time I came amongst them, the appearance of this armed mob, the leader of whom was he who has rendered the name of Washington famous. Such were the colonists—unskilled warriors who learned in a few years to conquer the finest troops that England could send against them."

Distressing as was the state of our men at Valley Forge, that low-water mark of the Revolution, the Comte de Revel shows how slightly conditions had improved by the time of the glorious victory at Yorktown: "I mounted guard at the tavern which was behind our camp until, at four o'clock in the evening, I was relieved by the Americans who arrived to camp on our left to the number of six hundred men. This troop, as poor

as one could imagine, looked exactly like our trained bands which mount guard in certain cities. Armed with guns, three-quarters of which had no bayonets, without uniforms, without any distinctive badge for their officers, without tents, it seemed nothing more than a gathering of poor country-folk, each bringing in his bag something to live upon for a few days, and each constructing for himself a hut of tree branches. They knew how to break to the right and to the left and to go through a sort of manual of arms." Robin, who, for a priest, always showed great interest in dress, is for that reason especially qualified to discourse to us upon the appearance of our ancestors: "These troops have as yet no regular uniforms. The officers and men of the artillery are the only ones who have it. Several regiments have little white fringed tunics which look rather well. The trousers—of cloth—are wide, so as not to incommode them in warm weather, and because not interfering with the play of the legs while marching they, on food less substantial and of a temperament less vigorous than ours, are able to endure more fatigue than we." Baron Closen comments: "The Americans suffered by comparison with our army both in appearance and equipment, for most of these unfortunates had only white cloth jackets, dirty and ragged, and many were barefooted. But what of that?

the sensible man will ask—they are all the more praiseworthy and brave for fighting as they do when so poorly equipped in every respect." Gérard, the French Minister, in a private despatch to his government, dated August 12, 1778, gives it as his opinion that "the people of America are in general too easy-going for the profession of soldiering. Each soldier after his service of six months with the army takes his clothing home with him. The colonies are peopled with country folk in uniform, and the army is without them. It has already been provided with enough to clothe 100,000 men."

This absence of uniforms and generally dishevelled appearance of our men comes out with dramatic clearness upon the occasion of the culminating episode of the War, the day of Cornwallis's surrender, when against Washington's inclination, but upon Lafayette's insistence, the English army were required to march out between the lines of the allied armies and lay down their arms. It inflames our pride and yet touches our pity to read of the appearance of our ancestors in that historic scene. Hear Robin's account of it: "The two lines of the combined army extended more than a mile. The Americans had the right of the line. Their inequality in age and height, the lack of uniformity in their ranks, and their ragged clothing made the French appear to advantage,

who, in spite of their fatigue, always presented a neat, warlike and vigorous appearance. We were all struck by the good condition of the English troops, their number and cleanliness. We had not supposed that they were more than three thousand. Cornwallis had ordered the military stores to be opened to the soldiers before the surrender. Each of them, therefore, wore a new uniform, but this very smartness of dress seemed to humiliate them the more when contrasted with the distressing condition of the Americans. They were ashamed to raise their eyes to their conquerors. One after another they laid down their arms in the agreed place; care had been taken to keep spectators away to diminish their humiliation. The English officers on their way back had the manners to salute even the lowest French officers, something which they did not do to American officers even of the highest grade."

It is most gratifying to find in several of the French authors the frank and friendly admission that the American losses at Yorktown were equal to those of the French troops; we, on our part, must with equal frankness, remember that the American column, which in the final assault sustained most of our losses, was led by Lafayette! Aucteville gives a detailed account of the composition of our army and its qualities: "The Republic's army was composed of four distinct groups,—the

American regiments of regulars, disciplined, drilled, tried, fit for line of battle, formed a body of about sixteen hundred men; 150 dragoons, well mounted, drilled, and good horsemen; twenty-five hundred militiamen and five hundred riflemen—a sort of mounted light infantry. These two last bodies of men are not uniformed, wear large trousers, with or without shoes. The last-named form especially excellent infantry men,—good shots, fit for skirmishing in the woods, but not for line of battle. Very few of these troops have tents, almost all camping in huts of grass or leaves. All are sober and patient, live on corn-bread, undergo privations or delays without murmuring, are capable of fatigue and long marches,—valuable qualities which make of them an infantry which is unusually mobile in character. Besides, they present a good appearance and most of them are fine looking men." "All their soldiers struck me," says the Prince de Broglie, "as fine-looking, robust and well selected,—the sentinels all carried themselves well." General Dumas speaks several times of the intelligence displayed by American officers. Perrin du Lac pays a compliment to the marksmanship of our troops in his comment that among the factories at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was one for "rifles, used by the westerners and by some of the Indian tribes for hunting. It was to this murderous weapon that the Americans owed several of

Reduced from copperplates of French sketches of American military types.

From the collection of the author.

their victories in the War of Independence—their skill in its use is so great that it must be seen to be believed."

The few words which Rochambeau employs in summing up his opinion of the American forces are a credit to the magnanimity of that singularly modest and efficient leader: "One should do the Americans the justice to say that they conducted themselves with a zeal and courage and an emulation which never left them behind others in all the work allotted to them, although they were strangers to siege operations." This proves how thoroughly they justified Lafayette's prediction to Vergennes, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, written from New Windsor, January 30, 1781, which was as discriminating as it was commendatory: "I feel myself in duty bound to adjust your ideas upon the American troops and upon the part which they will take in the operations of the next campaign. The Continental regiments are as brave and as well disciplined as those who oppose them. More hardy, more patient than Europeans, they need not be compared in these two respects with them. They have some officers of merit who (besides those who have served in the late colonial wars) are aided by natural ability and trained by the daily experience of several campaigns in which, the armies being small and the country difficult, all the light bat-

talions served as advance guard and skirmishers. The recruits which we are awaiting have frequently served in the same regiments to which they are now returning, and have been oftener under fire than three-quarters of European soldiers. As for the militia, it is nothing but armed peasants with some experience in fighting, who, although not lacking in ardor or discipline, will be best employed in siege operations. There, Monsieur le Comte, is the truthful picture I feel in duty bound to give you, and which it is not to my interest to touch up because there will be more glory to have succeeded with poor material. The Chevalier de la Luzerne, who has himself seen our soldiers and will give you an exact and disinterested account of them, will surely say as I do that you can rely upon our regular troops."

Ségur arrived just as the war was concluding, and could, therefore, tell us of what the training of those seven years of conflict had effected: "I had expected to see in this camp awkward soldiers, untrained officers, republicans lacking that urbanity which is common to our older civilized countries. I recalled those first days of their revolution when laborers and artisans who had never handled a gun, without waiting for orders, rushed in the name of country to attack the British phalanxes, to whose astonished gaze they seemed mere masses of rustics with no military

insignia but hats bearing the device 'Liberty.' You can, therefore, judge my surprise at finding a disciplined army whose every detail revealed order, reason, training, and experience. The generals, their staffs, and all the other officers showed in their bearing and discourse a certain nobility and modesty, and that natural goodwill which is to me preferable to a politeness whose sweet face is but a mask which one is forced to make amiable. This dignity of each individual, this pride inspired by love of liberty and the sentiment of equality had not caused the slightest difficulty for the Chief, who commanded them without arousing their discontent. To appreciate Washington's genius and wisdom it is enough to say that throughout all the difficulties of a revolutionary war, he has for seven years commanded the army of a free people without giving his country reason for alarm, and without causing Congress to mistrust him." An anecdote from General Dumas's memoirs shows how greatly Washington respected the position he occupied: "General Sir Henry Clinton sent a despatch addressed to 'Mr.' Washington. Taking it from the bearer of the flag of truce, and noticing the direction,— 'This letter,' said he, 'is directed to a Virginia planter. I shall have it delivered to him after the end of the war; till that time it shall not be opened.' A second despatch was directed to

His Excellency General Washington!" All the Frenchmen, with but one exception, were most enthusiastic in their praise of Washington as a leader, and their appreciation of him as a man. Bayard alone thought that posterity would not confirm the high opinion of him entertained by his contemporaries. Chateaubriand's account of our national hero, after a dinner at his house, is perhaps the most interesting of all, for he indulges in an extensive comparison between Washington and Napoleon, both of whom he knew personally. His conclusions are entirely in favor of the former because of his constructive career, as contrasted with Napoleon's destructive one. "Washington," says he, "has left behind him the United States as the great trophy won on his battlefields"; "the republic he founded endures, while the empire of Napoleon is destroyed."

Brissot throws a final comprehensive picture on the screen, and shows us the citizen returning to his ordinary life and exchanging the rifle for the plough: "The ravages of this seven years' war have been terrible, but as soon as the sword could be turned into a ploughshare the earth yielded its produce and misery disappeared. American soldiers were citizens and landholders before being soldiers. They remained citizens while in uniform, and when they quitted it returned each to his own home. It was not for money that they

fought, nor as a profession, but for their liberty, their wives, their children, their lands,—and such soldiers in no wise resemble the bandits of the old continent, who are paid to kill their fellow-men, and who killed on the high roads on their own account when peace compelled their employers to discharge them. We have seen in America what the history of the world shows in no other country except ancient Rome—a General adored by his soldiers relinquishing his power when it was no longer needed and retiring to peaceful private life; we have seen a numerous army which was paid nothing, generously agree to separate without payment and its soldiers retire to their homes without committing any disorder, each tranquilly betaking himself either to his cart or other original occupation—occupations which we consider menial in Europe." This service without pay was nothing new, but had existed as early as 1775, when Bonvouloir, a secret agent sent to America by the French Government, disguised as an Antwerp merchant, reported that in addition to our paid troops we had "a large number of volunteers who want no pay—you can judge how well people of that stamp will fight!"

There are almost no references by our French authors to an American federal navy, as distinguished from privateers, and indeed it was a negligible quantity during the War of the Revo-

lution. Of the thirteen frigates authorized in 1775, nine never got fairly to sea, being destroyed by our own men or by the English mostly before they had received their armament. There are many passages in these French writers, however, which are of great value to an historian of the American navy, for they unintentionally reveal how it was that a nation having no regular fleet in 1781 should have added such a glorious naval page to its history in 1812. We have discussed this amazing transformation when considering our ancestors' skill in ship-building, but it is not foreign to our present purpose to remark here that American ship-building, even in the days of the Revolution, had acquired great fame abroad, where many of our ships were sold. We learn from Robin that before the Revolution it was from Boston that Great Britain obtained masts and yards for her navy. Constant reference is also made by St. Méry and others to the large number of excellent seamen which our flourishing coastwise trade was constantly training. Furthermore, although the navy had hardly existed during the Revolution, privateering was carried on to such an extent that three hundred vessels were engaged in it, according to the despatch of October 17, 1778, sent by the French Minister, Gérard, to his Foreign Office. But even so late as Beaujour's observations during the

opening years of the nineteenth century, we had "difficulty in keeping up a flotilla of a few frigates and an Army which could not be compared in number with that of even a German prince. Their Navy is really only in miniature, and their Army but a skeleton formation." He foresees, however, the possibility of that rapid increase and strengthening of our navy which only a couple of years thereafter was to become so powerful: "The Navy of the United States is only in miniature; it consists of but seven or eight frigates, the same number of corvettes, some galleys for bomb-throwing and a few gunboats, the whole amounting to about four thousand men and five hundred cannon. This feeble navy is hardly comparable to that of Algeria, by which it is continually insulted, but the Americans could easily possess a much stronger one, because they have all the necessary material for constructing the vessels and nearly one hundred thousand sailors to man them. Adding up the different armed forces on land and sea, the total is now only about nine thousand men,—that is to say, there is in the United States hardly more than one man in a thousand employed in military service, while there is not a country of Europe with less than one in one hundred."

There are those, to-day, who urge that national defense (without which there can be no national

self-respect) does not need a strong navy, both constructed and in construction. They should not forget that the two months needed to build a ship in the glorious days of 1812 differs so widely from the two or three years now required for that same purpose as to make all the difference between a country always ready to preserve its dignity and one liable to many millions of loss from raids upon its seaport towns during those years spent in constructing what should already exist!

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